OPINIONS OF THE PRESS ON

A HISTORY OF OUR OWN TIMES.

By JUSTIN McCARTHY, M.P.

'Mr. McCarthy has finished the laborious and difficult task which he set before himself. . . . . But to have made his work complete is only a part of the success which Mr. McCarthy has achieved. The first condition which a history of our times must fulfil is, no doubt, that it should be a history of our own times, that it should tell us all we want to know, should tell no more, and should treat everything in the right perspective, so that the due amount of space and importance may be given to each successive event, or group of events. The next condition is that it must be fair, that contemporaries should be neither puffed nor maligned, that actions should be fairly interpreted, and that the author, while letting his readers know his opinions, should do justice to the side which he does not adopt. The third condition is that it should be entertaining, that the writer should have a good style and write well throughout, that he should perpetually make himself felt by his readers as being himself and no one else, and yet that he should avoid paradoxes, mere smartness, and the appearance of making epigrams to order. All these conditions Mr. McCarthy has fulfilled. His work is fairly exhaustive; but it cannot be said that it is ever prolix. . . . Then, it is eminently fair. Mr. McCarthy is temperate, reasonable, and judicious; his History is eminently entertaining, and his power of entertaining his readers never flags. He never seems to be exhausted, and his fourth volume is perhaps the best of the set. To say that this work is as pleasant and attractive to read as a novel is to pay a great compliment to novels. Almost every page has something in it that is good because it is at once unexpected and yet not forced. The book is pervaded with a gentle spirit of subdued fun, and yet is never frivolous or comic. Mr. McCarthy has not only the art of story-telling, but makes his narrative sparkle with happy hits, and yet these happy hits do not eclipse the more modest bulk of his story. There are so many bad books which must be criticised severely, that it is refreshing to come across a book which may be freely praised.'—SATURDAY REVIEW.

'Of modern historians, Mr. Justin McCarthy is among the most eminent. His rise was sudden. Known in literature as a successful novelist, it was not till the appearance of his first two volumes on the reign of Victoria that he obtained rank as a more serious writer. His History at once took the reading world by storm. The buoyancy of his narrative, his powers of picturesque description, his epigrammatic judgment of character, his lucid arrangement of facts, and the clear, fresh manner in which he dealt with his story and gave his opinions, charmed alike the philosophical student as well as the general reader. . . The end is as good as the beginning; there is no falling off and nothing to tempt invidious criticism. . . Mr. McCarthy's History is now finished, and we have no hesitation in saying that it is one of the ablest works that the latter part of this century has produced. It is written with spirit, yet accuracy is not sacrificed for effect; it is lively without flippancy, and when the occasion calls for sobriety of judgment, the author can be judicial without being opinionated, and thoughtful without being dull.'—OBSERVER.

'We have read the volumes throughout with unflagging interest, and have received from their pages an amount of pleasure equal to the enjoyment derivable from the perusal of one of Mr. McCarthy's most stirring and telling novels. Mr. McCarthy has written in a popular and effective style an important and useful work.'—MORNING POST.

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'Happier than many historians who have marked out for themselves a task of labour and difficulty, Mr. McCarthy has completed his "History of Our Own Times" within the limits originally intended, and certainly without any unreasonable delay. In the two solid volumes, which form the second and concluding portion of the work, he tells the story of our national life during the last twenty-four years. . . If the duty which he has imposed upon himself has, of necessity, become more delicate as the course of the narrative brings us more and more within the heated atmosphere of contemporary politics, the historian has found his recompense in the higher opportunities afforded him for exhibiting the tact and judgment conspicuous in his former volumes. The wide and genuine popularity of his History is a circumstance perhaps without parallel in the case of works of its class.'—DAILY NEWS.

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J. Taylor

A SHORT HISTORY
OF
OUR OWN TIMES

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A SHORT HISTORY

OF

OUR OWN TIMES

FROM

THE ACCESSION OF QUEEN VICTORIA

TO THE

GENERAL ELECTION OF 1880

BY

JUSTIN McCARTHY, M.P.

AUTHOR OF

'A HISTORY OF OUR OWN TIMES' 'HISTORY OF THE FOUR GEORGES' ETC.

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CONTENTS.

CHAPTER		PAGE
I.	A NEW REIGN OPENS	1
II.	SOME TROUBLES TO THE NEW REIGN	16
III.	DECLINE AND FALL OF THE MELBOURNE MINISTRY	36
IV.	THE AFGHAN WAR	44
V.	PEEL'S ADMINISTRATION	57
VI.	THE ANTI-CORN LAW LEAGUE	67
VII.	MR. DISRAELI	78
VIII.	FAMINE AND POLITICAL TROUBLE	84
IX.	ATHENS, ROME, AND LONDON	95
X.	PALMERSTON	110
XI.	THE CRIMEAN WAR	132
XII.	THE LORCHA 'ARROW.'—TRANSPORTATION	162
XIII.	THE INDIAN MUTINY	170
XIV.	THE END OF 'JOHN COMPANY'	195
XV.	THE CONSPIRACY BILL	200
XVI.	DISRAELI'S FIRST REFORM ENTERPRISE	214
XVII.	LORD PALMERSTON AGAIN	225
XVIII.	THE CIVIL WAR IN AMERICA	239
XIX.	THE LAST OF LORD PALMERSTON	251
XX.	THE NEW GOVERNMENT	275
XXI.	REFORM	294
XXII.	STRIFE AT HOME AND ABROAD	311
XXIII.	IRISH QUESTIONS	339
XXIV.	'REFORMATION IN A FLOOD'	359
XXV.	THE FALL OF THE GREAT ADMINISTRATION	379
XXVI.	LORD BEACONSFIELD	397
XXVII.	THE CONGRESS OF BERLIN	414
	INDEX	433

A SHORT HISTORY

OF

OUR OWN TIMES.

CHAPTER I.

A NEW REIGN OPENS.

Before half-past two o'clock on the morning of June 20, 1837, William IV. was lying dead in Windsor Castle, while the messengers were already hurrying off to Kensington Palace to bear to his successor her summons to the throne. With William ended the reign of personal government in England. King William had always held to and exercised the right to dismiss his ministers when he pleased, and because he pleased. In our day we should believe that the constitutional freedom of England was outraged, if a sovereign were to dismiss a ministry at mere pleasure, or to retain it in despite of the expressed wish of the House of Commons.

The manners of William IV. had been, like those of most of his brothers, somewhat rough and overbearing. He had been an unmanageable naval officer. He had made himself unpopular while Duke of Clarence by his strenuous opposition to some of the measures which were especially desired by all the enlightenment of the country. He was, for example, a determined opponent of the measures for the abolition of the slave trade. But William seems to have been one of the men whom increased responsibility improves. He was far better as a king than as a prince. He proved that he was able at least to understand that first duty of a constitutional sovereign which, to the last day of his active life, his father,

George III., never could be brought to comprehend—that the personal predilections and prejudices of the King must sometimes give way to the public interest. We must judge William by the reigns that went before, and not the reign that came after him, and admit that on the whole he was better than his education, his early opportunities, and his early promise.

William IV. (third son of George III.) had left no children who could have succeeded to the throne, and the crown passed therefore to the daughter of his brother (fourth son of George), the Duke of Kent. This was the Princess Alexandrina Victoria, who was born at Kensington Palace on May 24, 1819. The Princess was therefore at this time little more than eighteen years of age. The Duke of Kent died a few months after the birth of his daughter, and the child was brought up under the care of his widow. She was well brought up: both as regards her intellect and her character—her training was excellent. She was taught to be self-reliant, brave, and systematical. Prudence and economy were inculcated on her as though she had been born to be poor. One is not generally inclined to attach much importance to what historians tell us of the education of contemporary princes or princesses; but it cannot be doubted that the Princess Victoria was trained for intelligence and goodness.

There is a pretty description given by Miss Wynn of the manner in which the young sovereign received the news of her accession to a throne. The Archbishop of Canterbury, Dr. Howley, and the Lord Chamberlain, the Marquis of Conyngham, left Windsor for Kensington Palace, where the Princess Victoria had been residing, to inform her of the King's death. It was two hours after midnight when they started, and they did not reach Kensington until five o'clock in the morning. 'They knocked, they rang, they thumped for a considerable time before they could rouse the porter at the gate; they were again kept waiting in the courtyard, then turned into one of the lower rooms, where they seemed forgotten by everybody. They rang the bell, and desired that the attendant of the Princess Victoria might be sent to inform her Royal Highness that they requested an audience on business of importance. After another delay, and another ringing to inquire the cause, the attendant was summoned, who stated that the Princess was in such a sweet sleep that she could not venture to disturb her. Then they said, "We are come on business of State to the Queen, and even her

sleep must give way to that." It did; and to prove that she did not keep them waiting, in a few minutes she came into the room in a loose white nightgown and shawl, her nightcap thrown off, and her hair falling upon her shoulders, her feet in slippers, tears in her eyes, but perfectly collected and dignified.' The Prime Minister, Lord Melbourne, was presently sent for, and a meeting of the Privy Council summoned for eleven o'clock, when the Lord Chancellor administered the usual oaths to the Queen, and her Majesty received in return the oaths of allegiance of the Cabinet ministers and other privy councillors present.

The interest or curiosity with which the demeanour of the young Queen was watched was all the keener because the world in general knew so little about her. Not merely was the world in general thus ignorant, but even the statesmen and officials in closest communication with court circles were in almost absolute ignorance. The young Queen had been previously kept in such seclusion by her mother, that 'not one of her acquaintance, none of the attendants at Kensington, not even the Duchess of Northumberland, her governess, have any idea what she is or what she promises to be.' There was enough in the court of the two sovereigns who went before Queen Victoria to justify any strictness of seclusion which the Duchess of Kent might desire for her daughter. No one can read even the most favourable descriptions given by contemporaries of the manners of those two courts without feeling grateful to the Duchess of Kent for resolving that her daughter should see as little as possible of their ways and their company.

It is not necessary to go into any formal description of the proclamation of the Queen, her appearance for the first time on the throne in the House of Lords when she prorogued Parliament in person, and even the gorgeous festival of her coronation, which took place on June 28, in the following year, 1838. It is a fact, however, well worthy of note, amid whatever records of court ceremonial and of political change, that a few days after the accession of the Queen, Mr. Montefiore was elected Sheriff of London, the first Jew who had ever been chosen for that office; and that he received knighthood at the hands of her Majesty when she visited the City on the following Lord Mayor's day. He was the first Jew whom royalty had honoured in this country since the good old times when royalty was pleased to borrow the Jew's money, or order

instead the extraction of his teeth. The expansion of the principle of religious liberty and equality which has been one of the most remarkable characteristics of the reign of Queen Victoria, could hardly have been more becomingly inaugurated than by the compliment which sovereign and city paid to Sir Moses Montefiore.

The first signature attached to the Act of Allegiance presented to the Queen at Kensington Palace was that of her eldest surviving uncle, Ernest, Duke of Cumberland. The fact may be taken as an excuse for introducing a few words here to record the severance of the connection which had existed for some generations between this country and Hanover. The connection was only personal, the Hanoverian kings of England being also by succession sovereigns of Hanover. The crown of Hanover was limited in its descent to the male line, and it passed on the death of William IV. to his eldest surviving brother, Ernest, Duke of Cumberland. The change was in almost every way satisfactory to the English people. The indirect connection between England and Hanover had at no time been a matter of gratification to the public of this country, and Englishmen were not by any means sorry to be rid of the Duke of Cumberland. Not many of George III.'s sons were popular; the Duke of Cumberland was probably the least popular of all. His manners were rude, overbearing, and sometimes even brutal. Rumour not unnaturally exaggerated his defects, and in the mouths of many his name was the symbol of the darkest and fiercest passions, and even crimes. Some of the popular reports with regard to him had their foundation only in the common detestation of his character and dread of his influence. But it is certain that he was profligate, selfish, overbearing and quarrelsome.

It was felt in England that the mere departure of the Duke of Cumberland from this country would have made the severance of the connection with Hanover desirable, even if it had not been in other ways an advantage to us. Later times have shown how much we have gained by the separation. It would have been exceedingly inconvenient, to say the least, if the crown worn by a sovereign of England had been hazarded in the war between Austria and Prussia in 1866. Our reigning family must have seemed to suffer in dignity if that crown had been roughly knocked off the head of its wearer who happened to be an English sovereign; and it would have been absurd to expect that the English people

could engage in a quarrel with which their interests and honour had absolutely nothing to do, for the sake of a mere family possession of their ruling house.

Lord Melbourne was the first Minister of the Crown when the Queen succeeded to the throne. He was a man who then and always after made himself particularly dear to the Queen, and for whom she had the strongest regard. He was of kindly, somewhat indolent nature; fair and even generous towards his political opponents; of the most genial disposition towards his friends. He was emphatically not a strong man. He was not a man to make good grow where it was not already growing. He was a kindly counsellor to a young Queen; and happily for herself the young Queen in this case had strong clear sense enough of her own not to be absolutely dependent on any counsel. Lord Melbourne was not a statesman. His best qualities, personal kindness and good nature apart, were purely negative. He was unfortunately not content even with the reputation for a sort of indolent good nature which he might have well deserved. He strove to make himself appear hopelessly idle, trivial, and careless. When he really was serious and earnest he seemed to make it his business to look like one in whom no human affairs could call up a gleam of interest. We have amusing pictures of him as he occupied himself in blowing a feather or nursing a sofa-cushion while receiving an important and perhaps highly sensitive deputation from this or that commercial 'interest.' Those who knew him insisted that he really was listening with all his might and main; that he had sat up the whole night before studying the question which he seemed to think so unworthy of any attention; and that so far from being wholly absorbed in his trifles, he was at very great pains to keep up the appearance of a trifler.

Such a masquerading might perhaps have been excusable, or even attractive, in the case of a man of really brilliant and commanding talents. But in Lord Melbourne's case the affectation had no such excuse or happy effect. He was a poor speaker, only fitted to rule in the quietest times. Debates were then conducted with a bitterness of personality unknown, or at all events very rarely known, in our days. Even in the House of Lords language was often interchanged of the most virulent hostility.

Lord Melbourne's constant attendance on the young Queen was regarded with keen jealousy and dissatisfaction. According to some critics the Prime Minister was endeavouring to

inspire her with all his own gay heedlessness of character and temperament. According to others, Lord Melbourne's purpose was to make himself agreeable and indispensable to the Queen, to surround her with his friends, relations, and creatures, and thus to get a lifelong hold of power in England, in defiance of political changes and parties. But he does not appear to have been greedy of power, or to have used any unfair means of getting or keeping it. The character of the young Sovereign seems to have impressed him deeply. His real or affected levity gave way to a genuine and lasting desire to make her life as happy and her reign as successful as he could. The Queen always felt the warmest affection and gratitude for him. Still, it is certain that the Queen's Prime Minister was by no means a popular man at the time of her accession. When the new reign began, the Ministry had two enemies or critics in the House of Lords of the most formidable character. Either alone would have been a trouble to a minister of far stronger mould than Lord Melbourne; but circumstances threw them both for the moment into a chance alliance against him.

One of these was Lord Brougham. No character stronger and stranger than his is described in the modern history of England. He was gifted with the most varied and striking talents, and with a capacity for labour which sometimes seemed almost superhuman. Not merely had he the capacity for labour, but he appeared to have a positive passion for work. His restless energy seemed as if it must stretch itself out on every side seeking new fields of conquest. The study that was enough to occupy the whole time and wear out the frame of other men was only recreation to him. His physical strength never gave way. His high spirits never deserted him. His self-confidence was boundless. He thought he knew everything and could do everything better than any other man. His vanity was overweening, and made him ridiculous almost as often and as much as his genius made him admired. 'If Brougham knew a little of law,' said O'Connell, when the former became Lord Chancellor, 'he would know a little of everything.' The anecdote is told in another way too, which perhaps makes it even more piquant. 'The new Lord Chancellor knows a little of everything in the world—even of law.' He was beyond doubt a great Parliamentary orator, although not an orator of the highest class. Brougham's action was wild, and sometimes even furious; his gestures were

singularly ungraceful; his manners were grotesque; but of his power over his hearers there could be no doubt. That power remained with him until a far later date; and long after the years when men usually continue to take part in political debate, Lord Brougham could be impassioned, impressive, and even overwhelming. If his talents were great, if his personal vanity was immense, let it be said that his services to the cause of human freedom and education were simply inestimable. As an opponent of slavery in the colonies, as an advocate of political reform at home, of law reform, of popular education, of religious equality, he had worked with indomitable zeal, with resistless passion, and with splendid success. He was left out of office on the reconstruction of the Whig Ministry in April 1835, and he passed for the remainder of his life into the position of an independent or unattached critic of the measures and policy of other men. It has never been clearly known why the Whigs so suddenly threw over Brougham. The common belief is that his eccentricities and his almost savage temper made him intolerable in a cabinet. It has been darkly hinted that for a while his intellect was actually under a cloud, as people said that of Chatham was during a momentous season. Lord Brougham was not a man likely to forget or forgive the wrong which he must have believed that he had sustained at the hands of the Whigs. He became the fiercest and most formidable of Lord Melbourne's hostile critics.

The other great opponent was Lord Lyndhurst. He was one of the most effective Parliamentary debaters of his time. His style was singularly and even severely clear, direct and pure; his manner was easy and graceful; his voice remarkably sweet and strong. Nothing could have been in greater contrast than his clear, correct, nervous argument, and the impassioned invectives and overwhelming strength of Brougham. Lyndhurst had an immense capacity for work, when the work had to be done; but his natural tendency was as distinctly towards indolence as Brougham's was towards unresting activity. Nor were Lyndhurst's political convictions ever very clear. By the habitude of associating with the Tories, and receiving office from them, and speaking for them, and attacking their enemies with argument and sarcasm, Lyndhurst finally settled down into all the ways of Toryism. But nothing in his varied history showed that he had any particular preference that way; and there were many passages in his career when it would seem

as if a turn of chance decided what part of political life he was to follow. As a keen debater he was perhaps hardly ever excelled in Parliament; but he had neither the passion nor the genius of the orator; and his capacity was narrow indeed in its range when compared with the astonishing versatility and omnivorous mental activity of Brougham. As a speaker he was always equal. He seemed to know no varying moods or fits of mental lassitude. Whenever he spoke he reached at once the same high level as a debater. The very fact may in itself perhaps be taken as conclusive evidence that he was not an orator. The higher qualities of the orator are no more to be summoned at will than those of the poet.

These two men were without any comparison the two leading debaters in the House of Lords. Lord Melbourne had not at that time in the Upper House a single man of first class or even of second class debating power on the bench of the ministry. An able writer has well remarked that the position of the Ministry in the House of Lords might be compared to that of a water-logged wreck into which enemies from all quarters are pouring their broadsides.

The law at that time made it necessary that a new Parliament should be summoned on the accession of the new Sovereign. The result was not a very marked alteration in the condition of parties; but on the whole the advantage was with the Tories. Somewhere about this time, it may be remarked, the use of the word 'Conservative' to describe the latter political party first came into fashion. During the elections for the new Parliament, Lord John Russell, speaking at a public dinner at Stroud, made allusion to the new name which his opponents were beginning to affect for their party. 'If that,' he said, 'is the name that pleases them, if they say that the old distinction of Whig and Tory should no longer be kept up, I am ready, in opposition to their name of Conservative, to take the name of Reformer, and to stand by that opposition.'

The new Parliament on its assembling seems to have gathered in the Commons an unusually large number of gifted and promising men. Mr. Grote, the historian of Greece, sat for the City of London. The late Lord Lytton. then Mr. Edward Lytton Bulwer, had a seat, an advanced Radical at that day. Mr. Disraeli came then into Parliament for the first time. Charles Buller, full of high spirits, brilliant humour, and the very inspiration of keen good sense, seemed on the sure

way to that career of renown which a premature death cut short. Sir William Molesworth was an excellent type of the school which in later days was called the Philosophical Radical. Another distinguished member of the same school, Mr. Roebuck, had lost his seat, and was for the moment an outsider. Mr. Gladstone had been already five years in Parliament. The late Lord Carlisle, then Lord Morpeth, was looked upon as a graceful specimen of the literary and artistic young nobleman, who also cultivates a little politics for his intellectual amusement. Lord John Russell had but lately begun his career as leader of the House of Commons. Lord Palmerston was Foreign Secretary, but had not even then got the credit of the great ability which he possessed. Only those who knew him very well had any idea of the capacity for governing Parliament and the country which he was soon afterwards to display. Sir Robert Peel was leader of the Conservative party. Lord Stanley, the late Lord Derby, was still in the House of Commons. He had not long before broken definitely with the Whigs on the question of the Irish ecclesiastical establishment, and had passed over to that Conservative party of which he afterwards became the most influential leader, and the most powerful Parliamentary orator.

The ministry was not very strong in the House of Commons. Its adherents were but loosely held together. Sir Robert Peel, the leader of the Opposition, was by far the most powerful man in the House. Added to his great qualities as an administrator and a Parliamentary debater, he had the virtue, then very rare among Conservative statesmen, of being a sound and clear financier, with a good grasp of the fundamental principles of political economy. His high austere character made him respected by opponents as well as by friends. He had not perhaps many intimate friends. His temperament was cold, or at least its heat was self-contained; he threw out no genial glow to those around him. He was by nature a reserved and shy man, in whose manners shyness took the form of pompousness and coldness. It is certain that he had warm and generous feelings, but his very sensitiveness only led him to disguise them. The contrast between his emotions and his lack of demonstrativeness created in him a constant artificiality which often seemed mere awkwardness. It was in the House of Commons that his real genius and character displayed themselves. Peel was a perfect master of the House of Commons. He was as great an orator as any man could be who addresses himself

to the House of Commons, its ways and its purposes alone. Sir Robert Peel had little imagination, and almost none of that passion which in eloquence sometimes supplies its place. His style was clear, strong, and stately; full of various argument and apt illustration drawn from books and from the world of politics and commerce. He followed a difficult argument home to its utter conclusions; and if it had in it any lurking fallacy, he brought out the weakness into the clearest light, often with a happy touch of humour and quiet sarcasm. His speeches might be described as the very perfection of good sense and high principle clothed in the most impressive language. But they were something more peculiar than this, for they were so constructed, in their argument and their style alike, as to touch the very core of the intelligence of the House of Commons. They told of the feelings and the inspiration of Parliament as the ballad-music of a country tells of its scenery and its national sentiments.

Lord Stanley was a far more energetic and impassioned speaker than Sir Robert Peel, and perhaps occasionally, in his later career, came now and then nearer to the height of genuine oratory. But Lord Stanley was little more than a splendid Parliamentary partisan, even when, long after, he was Prime Minister of England. He had very little indeed of that class of information which the modern world requires of its statesmen and leaders. Of political economy, of finance, of the development and the discoveries of modern science, he knew almost as little as it is possible for an able and energetic man to know who lives in the throng of active life and hears what people are talking of around him. He once said good-humouredly of himself, that he was brought up in the pre-scientific period. He had, in fact, what would have been called at an earlier day an elegant scholarship; he had a considerable knowledge of the politics of his time in most European countries, an energetic intrepid spirit, and with him the science of Parliamentary debate seemed to be an instinct. There was no speaker on the ministerial benches at that time who could for a moment be compared with him.

Lord John Russell, who had the leadership of the party in the House of Commons, was really a much stronger man than he seemed to be. He had a character for dauntless courage and confidence among his friends; for boundless self-conceit among his enemies. He had in truth much less genius than his friends and admirers believed, and a great deal more of

practical strength than either friends or foes gave him credit for. He became, not indeed an orator, but a very keen debater, who was especially effective in a cold irritating sarcasm which penetrated the weakness of an opponent's argument like some dissolving acid. The thin bright stream of argument worked its way slowly out and contrived to wear a path for itself through obstacles which at first the looker-on might have felt assured it never could penetrate.

Our English system of government by party makes the history of Parliament seem like that of a succession of great political duels. Two men stand constantly confronted during a series of years, one of whom is at the head of the Government, while the other is at the head of the Opposition. They change places with each victory. The conqueror goes into office; the conquered into opposition. It has often happened that the two leading opponents are men of intellectual and oratorical powers so fairly balanced that their followers may well dispute among themselves as to the superiority of their respective chiefs, and that the public in general may become divided into two schools not merely political but even critical, according to their partiality for one or the other. For many years Lord John Russell and Sir Robert Peel stood thus opposed. Peel had by far the more original mind, and Lord John Russell never obtained so great an influence over the House of Commons as that which his rival long enjoyed. Lord John Russell was a born reformer. He had sat at the feet of Fox. He was cradled in the principles of Liberalism. He held faithfully to his creed; he was one of its boldest and keenest champions. He had great advantages over Peel, in the mere fact that he had begun his education in a more enlightened school. But he wanted passion quite as much as Peel did, and remained still farther than Peel below the level of the genuine orator.

After the chiefs of Ministry and of Opposition, the most conspicuous figure in the House of Commons was the colossal form of O'Connell, the great Irish agitator, of whom we shall hear a good deal more. Among the foremost orators of the House at that time was O'Connell's impassioned lieutenant, Richard Lalor Sheil.

A reign which saw in its earliest years the application of the electric current to the task of transmitting messages, the first successful attempts to make use of steam for the business of Transatlantic navigation, the general development of the

railway system all over these countries, and the introduction of the penny post, must be considered to have obtained for itself, had it secured no other memorials, an abiding place in history. The history of the past forty or fifty years is almost absolutely distinct from that of any preceding period. In all that part of our social life which is affected by industrial and mechanical appliances we see a complete revolution. A man of the present day suddenly thrust back fifty years in life, would find himself almost as awkwardly unsuited to the ways of that time as if he were sent back to the age when the Romans occupied Britain. He would find himself harassed at every step he took. He could do hardly anything as he does it to-day. Sir Robert Peel travelled from Rome to London to assume office as Prime Minister, exactly as Constantine travelled from York to Rome to become Emperor. Each traveller had all that sails and horses could do for him, and no more. A few years later Peel might have reached London from Rome in some forty-eight hours.

It is a somewhat curious coincidence, that in the year when Professor Wheatstone and Mr. Cooke took out their first patent 'for improvements in giving signals and sounding alarms in distant places by means of electric currents transmitted through metallic circuit,' Professor Morse, the American electrician, applied to Congress for aid in the construction and carrying on of a small electric telegraph to convey messages a short distance, and made the application without success. In the following year he came to this country to obtain a patent for his invention; but he was refused. He had come too late. Our own countrymen were beforehand with him. Very soon after we find experiments made with the electric telegraph between Euston Square and Camden Town. The London and Birmingham Railway was opened through its whole length in 1838. The Liverpool and Preston line was opened in the same year. The Liverpool and Birmingham had been opened in the year before; the London and Croydon was opened the year after. The Act for the transmission of the mails by railways was passed in 1838. In the same year it was noted as an unparalleled, and to many an almost incredible, triumph of human energy and science over time and space, that a locomotive had been able to travel at a speed of thirty-seven miles an hour.

Steam communication was successfully established between England and the United States. The *Sirius*, the *Great Western*,

and the *Royal William* accomplished voyages between New York and this country in the early part of 1838. The *Great Western* crossed the ocean from Bristol to New York in fifteen days. She was followed by the *Sirius*, which left Cork for New York, and made the passage in seventeen days. The controversy as to the possibility of such voyages had no reference to the actual safety of such an experiment. During seven years the mails for the Mediterranean had been despatched by means of steamers. Neither the *Sirius* nor the *Great Western* was the first vessel to cross the Atlantic by means of steam propulsion. Nearly twenty years before, a vessel called the *Savannah*, built at New York, crossed the ocean to Liverpool, and a voyage had been made round the Cape of Good Hope more lately still by a steamship. These expeditions, however, had really little or nothing to do with the problem which was solved by the voyages of the *Sirius* and the *Great Western*. In the former instances the vessel made as much use of her steam propulsion as she could, but she had to rely a good deal on her capacity as a sailer. This was quite a different thing from the enterprise of the *Sirius* and the *Great Western*, which was to cross the ocean by steam propulsion only. It is evident that so long as the steam power was to be used only as an auxiliary, it would be impossible to reckon on speed and certainty of arrival. The doubt was whether a steamer could carry, with her cargo and passengers, fuel enough to serve for the whole of her voyage across the Atlantic. The expeditions of the *Sirius* and the *Great Western* settled the whole question. Two years after the *Great Western* went out from Bristol to New York the Cunard line of steamers was established. The steam communication between Liverpool and New York became thenceforth as regular and as unvarying a part of the business of commerce as the journeys of the trains on the Great Western Railway between London and Bristol.

Up to this time the rates of postage were very high, and varied both as to distance and as to the weight and even the size or the shape of a letter. The average postage on every chargeable letter throughout the United Kingdom was sixpence farthing. A letter from London to Brighton cost eightpence; to Aberdeen one shilling and threepence halfpenny; to Belfast one shilling and fourpence. Nor was this all; for if the letter were written on more than one sheet of paper, it came under the operation of a higher scale of charge. Members of Parliament and members of the Government had the privilege of

franking letters. The franking privilege consisted in the right of the privileged person to send his own or any other person's letters through the post free of charge by merely writing his name on the outside. This meant, in plain words, that the letters of the class who could best afford to pay for them went free of charge, and that those who could least afford to pay had to pay double—the expense, that is to say, of carrying their own letters and the letters of the privileged and exempt.

Mr. (afterwards Sir Rowland) Hill is the man to whom this country, and indeed all civilisation, owes the adoption of the cheap and uniform system. His plan has been adopted by every State which professes to have a postal system at all. Mr. Hill belonged to a remarkable family. His father, Thomas Wright Hill, was a teacher, a man of advanced and practical views in popular education, a devoted lover of science, an advocate of civil and religious liberty, and a sort of celebrity in the Birmingham of his day. He had five sons, every one of whom made himself more or less conspicuous as a practical reformer in one path or another. The eldest of the sons was Matthew Davenport Hill, the philanthropic Recorder of Birmingham, who did so much for prison reform and for the reclamation of juvenile offenders. The third son was Rowland Hill, the author of the cheap postal system. Rowland Hill when a little weakly child began to show some such precocious love for arithmetical calculations as Pascal showed for mathematics. His favourite amusement as a child was to lie on the hearthrug and count up figures by the hour together. As he grew up he became teacher of mathematics in his father's school. Afterwards he was appointed secretary to the South Australian Commission, and rendered much valuable service in the organisation of the colony of South Australia. A picturesque and touching little illustration of the veritable hardships of the existing system seems to have quickened his interest in Postal reform. Miss Martineau thus tells the story:—

'Coleridge, when a young man, was walking through the Lake district, when he one day saw the postman deliver a letter to a woman at a cottage door. The woman turned it over and examined it, and then returned it, saying she could not pay the postage, which was a shilling. Hearing that the letter was from her brother, Coleridge paid the postage in spite of the manifest unwillingness of the woman. As soon as the postman was out of sight she showed Coleridge how his money had been wasted, as far as she was concerned. The sheet was

blank. There was an agreement between her brother and herself that as long as all went well with him he should send a blank sheet in this way once a quarter; and she thus had tidings of him without expense of postage. Most persons would have remembered this incident as a curious story to tell; but there was one mind which wakened up at once to a sense of the significance of the fact. It struck Mr. Rowland Hill that there must be something wrong in a system which drove a brother and sister to cheating, in order to gratify their desire to hear of one another's welfare.'

Mr. Hill gradually worked out for himself a comprehensive scheme of reform. He put it before the world early in 1837. The root of Mr. Hill's system lay in the fact, made evident by him beyond dispute, that the actual cost of the conveyance of letters through the post was very trifling, and was but little increased by the distance over which they had to be carried. His proposal was therefore that the rates of postage should be diminished to a minimum; that at the same time the speed of conveyance should be increased, and that there should be much greater frequency of despatch. He recommended the uniform charge of one penny the half-ounce, without reference to the distance within the limits of the United Kingdom which the letter had to be carried.

The Post Office authorities were at first uncompromising in their opposition to the scheme. They were convinced that it must involve an unbearable loss of revenue. But the Government took up the scheme with some spirit and liberality. Petitions from all the commercial communities were pouring in to support the plan, and to ask that at least it should have a fair trial. The Government at length determined in 1839 to bring in a bill which should provide for the almost immediate introduction of Mr. Hill's scheme, and for the abolition of the franking system except in the case of official letters actually sent on business directly belonging to her Majesty's service. The bill declared, as an introductory step, that the charge for postage should be at the rate of fourpence for each letter under half an ounce in weight, irrespective of distance, within the limits of the United Kingdom. This, however, was to be only a beginning; for on January 10, 1840, the postage was fixed at the uniform rate of one penny per letter of not more than half an ounce in weight. Some idea of the effect it has produced upon the postal correspondence of the country may be gathered from the fact that

in 1839, the last year of the heavy postage, the number of letters delivered in Great Britain and Ireland was eighty-two millions, which included some five millions and a half of franked letters returning nothing to the revenue of the country; whereas, in 1875, more than a thousand millions of letters were delivered in the United Kingdom. The population during the same time had not nearly doubled itself.

CHAPTER II.

SOME TROUBLES TO THE NEW REIGN.

THE new Queen's reign opened amid many grim and unpromising conditions of our social affairs. The winter of 1837–8 was one of unusual severity and distress. There would have been much discontent and grumbling in any case among the class, but the complaints were aggravated by a common belief that the young Queen was wholly under the influence of a frivolous and selfish minister, who occupied her with amusements while the poor were starving. It does not appear that there was at any time the slightest justification for such a belief; but it prevailed among the working classes and the poor very generally, and added to the sufferings of genuine want the bitterness of imaginary wrong.

Only a few weeks after the coronation of the Queen a great Radical meeting was held in Birmingham. A manifesto was adopted there which afterwards came to be known as the Chartist petition. With that moment Chartism began to be one of the most disturbing influences of the political life of the country. For ten years it agitated England. It might have been a very serious danger if the State had been involved in any external difficulties. It was backed by much genuine enthusiasm, passion and intelligence. It appealed strongly and naturally to whatever there was of discontent among the working classes. Its fierce and fitful flame went out at last under the influence of the clear, strong and steady light of political reform and education. The one great lesson it teaches is, that political agitation lives and is formidable only by virtue of what is reasonable in its demands. Thousands of ignorant and miserable men all over the country joined the Chartist agitation who cared nothing about the substantial value of its political claims. They were poor, they were overworked, they were badly paid, their lives

were altogether wretched. They got into their heads some wild idea that the People's Charter would give them better food and wages and lighter work if it were obtained, and that for that very reason the aristocrats and the officials would not grant it.

The Reform Bill of 1832 had done great things for the constitutional system of England. It abolished fifty-six nomination or rotten boroughs, and took away half the representation from thirty others; it disposed of the seats thus obtained by giving sixty-five additional representatives to the counties, and conferred the right of returning members on Manchester, Leeds, Birmingham, and some thirty-nine large and prosperous towns which had previously had no representation. The bill introduced a 10*l.* household qualification for boroughs, and extended the county franchise to leaseholders and copyholders. But it left the working classes almost altogether out of the franchise. It broke down the monopoly which the aristocracy and landed classes had enjoyed, and admitted the middle classes to a share of the law-making power, but the working class, in the opinion of many of their ablest and most influential representatives, were not merely left out, but shouldered out. This was all the more exasperating, because the excitement and agitation by the strength of which the Reform Bill was carried in the teeth of so much resistance were kept up by the working men. Rightly or wrongly they believed that their strength had been kept in reserve to secure the carrying of the Reform Bill, and that when it was carried they were immediately thrown over by those whom they had thus helped to pass it. Therefore at the time when the young Sovereign ascended the throne, the working classes in all the large towns were in a state of profound disappointment and discontent, almost indeed of disaffection. Chartism was beginning to succeed to the Reform agitation.

Chartism may be said to have sprung definitively into existence in consequence of the formal declarations of the leaders of the Liberal party in Parliament that they did not intend to push Reform any farther. At the opening of the first Parliament of Queen Victoria's reign the question was brought to a test. A Radical member of the House of Commons moved as an amendment to the address a resolution declaring in favour of the ballot and of shorter duration of Parliaments. Only twenty members voted for it; and Lord John Russell declared that to push Reform any farther then would be a breach of faith towards those who helped him to carry it. A great many outside Parlia-

ment not unnaturally regarded the refusal to go any farther as a breach of faith towards them on the part of the Liberal leaders. A conference was held almost immediately between a few of the Liberal members of Parliament who professed Radical opinions and some of the leaders of the working men. At this conference the programme, or what was afterwards known as 'the Charter,' was agreed upon and drawn up. The name of Charter was given by Mr. O'Connell.

Quietly studied now, the People's Charter does not seem a very formidable document. Its 'points,' as they were called, were six. Manhood Suffrage came first. The second was Annual Parliaments. Vote by Ballot was the third. Abolition of the Property Qualification (then and for many years after required for the election of a member to Parliament) was the fourth. The Payment of Members was the fifth; and the Division of the Country into Equal Electoral Districts, the sixth of the famous points. Three of the points—half, that is to say, of the whole number—have already been made part of our constitutional system. The existing franchise may be virtually regarded as manhood suffrage. We have for years been voting by means of a written paper dropped in a ballot-box. The property qualification for members of Parliament could hardly be said to have been abolished. Such a word seems far too grand and dignified to describe the fate that befell it. We should rather say that it was extinguished by its own absurdity and viciousness. The proposal to divide the country into equal electoral districts is one which can hardly yet be regarded as having come to any test. But it is almost certain that sooner or later some alteration of our present system in that direction will be adopted. Of the two other points of the Charter, the payment of members may be regarded as decidedly objectionable; and that for yearly Parliaments as embodying a proposition which would make public life an almost insufferable nuisance to those actively concerned in it.

The Chartists might be roughly divided into three classes —the political Chartists, the social Chartists, and the Chartists of vague discontent who joined the movement because they were wretched and felt angry. The first were the regular political agitators who wanted a wider popular representation; the second were chiefly led to the movement by their hatred of the 'bread-tax.' These two classes were perfectly clear as to what they wanted: some of their demands were just and

reasonable; none of them were without the sphere of rational and peaceful controversy. The disciples of mere discontent naturally swerved alternately to the side of those leaders or sections who talked loudest and fiercest against the lawmakers and the constituted authorities. Chartism soon split itself into two general divisions—the moral force and the physical force Chartism. A whole literature of Chartist newspapers sprang up to advocate the cause. The *Northern Star* was the most popular and influential of them; but every great town had its Chartist press. Meetings were held at which sometimes the most violent language was employed. It began to be the practice to hold torchlight meetings at night, and many men went armed to these, and open clamour was made by the wilder of the Chartists for an appeal to arms. A formidable riot took place in Birmingham, where the authorities endeavoured to put down a Chartist meeting. The Government began to prosecute some of the orators and leaders of the Charter movement; and some of these were convicted, imprisoned, and treated with great severity.

Wide and almost universal discontent among the working classes in town and country still helped to swell the Chartist ranks. The weavers and stockingers in some of the manufacturing towns were miserably poor. Wages were low everywhere. In the agricultural districts the complaints against the operation of the new Poor Law were vehement and passionate; and although they were unjust in principle and sustained by monstrous exaggerations of statement, they were not the less potent as recruiting agents for Chartism. There was a profound distrust of the middle class and their leaders. It is clear that at that time the Chartists, who represented the bulk of the artisan class in most of the large towns, did in their very hearts believe that England was ruled for the benefit of aristocrats and millionaires who were absolutely indifferent to the sufferings of the poor. It is equally clear that most of what are called the ruling class did really believe the English working men who joined the Chartist movement to be a race of fierce, unmanageable and selfish communists who, if they were allowed their own way for a moment, would prove themselves determined to overthrow throne, altar, and all established securities of society. An ignorant panic prevailed on both sides.

The first foreign disturbance to the quiet and good promise of the new reign came from Canada. The condition of

Canada was very peculiar. By an Act called the Constitution of 1791, Canada was divided into two provinces, the Upper and the Lower. Each province had a separate system of government, consisting of a governor, an executive council appointed by the Crown, and supposed in some way to resemble the Privy Council of this country; a legislative council, the members of which were appointed by the Crown for life; and a Representative Assembly, the members of which were elected for four years. At the same time the clergy reserves were established by Parliament. One-seventh of the waste lands of the colony was set aside for the maintenance of the Protestant clergy, a fruitful source of disturbance and ill-feeling. Lower or Eastern Canada was inhabited for the most part by men of French descent, who still kept up in the midst of an active and moving civilisation most of the principles and usages which belonged to mediæval France. Lower Canada would have dozed away in its sleepy picturesqueness, held fast to its ancient ways, and allowed a bustling giddy world, all alive with commerce and ambition, and desire for novelty and the terribly disturbing thing which unresting people called progress, to rush on its wild path unheeded. But in the large towns there were active traders from England and other countries, who were by no means content to put up with old-world ways, and to let the magnificent resources of the place run to waste. Upper Canada, on the other hand, was all new as to its population, and was full of the modern desire for commercial activity. Upper Canada was peopled almost exclusively by inhabitants from great Britain.

It is easy to see on the very face of things some of the difficulties which must arise in the development of such a system. The French of Lower Canada would regard with almost morbid jealousy any legislation which appeared likely to interfere with their ancient ways and to give any advantage or favour to the populations of British descent. The latter would see injustice or feebleness in every measure which did not assist them in developing their more energetic ideas.

It was in Lower Canada that the greatest difficulties arose. A constant antagonism grew up between the majority of the Representative Assembly, who were elected by the population of the province. At last the Representative Assembly refused to vote any further supplies or to carry on any further business. They formulated their grievances against the Home

Government. Their complaints were of arbitrary conduct on the part of the governors; intolerable composition of the legislative council, which they insisted ought to be elective; illegal appropriation of the public money; and violent prorogation of the provincial Parliament.

One of the leading men in the movement was Mr. Louis Joseph Papineau. This man had risen to high position by his talents, his energy, and his undoubtedly honourable character. He had represented Montreal in the Representative Assembly of Lower Canada, and he afterwards became Speaker of the House. He made himself leader of the movement to protest against the policy of the governors, and that of the Government at home by whom they were sustained. He held a series of meetings, at some of which undoubtedly rather strong language was used, and too frequent and significant appeals were made to the example held out to the population of Lower Canada by the successful revolt of the United States. Mr. Papineau also planned the calling together of a great convention to discuss and proclaim the grievances of the colonies. Lord Gosford, the governor, began by dismissing several militia officers who had taken part in some of these demonstrations; Mr. Papineau himself was an officer of this force. Then the governor issued warrants for the apprehension of many members of the popular Assembly on the charge of high treason. Some of these at once left the country; others against whom warrants were issued were arrested, and a sudden resistance was made by their friends and supporters. Then, in the manner familiar to all who have read anything of the history of revolutionary movements, the resistance to a capture of prisoners suddenly transformed itself into open rebellion.

The rebellion was not in a military sense a very great thing. At its first outbreak the military authorities were for a moment surprised, and the rebels obtained one or two trifling advantages. But the commander-in-chief at once showed energy adequate to the occasion, and used, as it was his duty to do, a strong hand in putting the movement down. The rebels fought with something like desperation in one or two instances, and there was, it must be said, a good deal of blood shed. The disturbance, however, after a while extended to the upper province. Upper Canada too had its complaints against its governors and the Home Government.

The news of the outbreaks in Canada created a natural

excitement in this country. There was a very strong feeling of sympathy among many classes here—not, indeed, with the rebellion, but with the colony which complained of what seemed to be genuine and serious grievances. Public meetings were held at which resolutions were passed ascribing the disturbances in the first place to the refusal by the Government of any redress sought for by the colonists. Lord John Russell on the part of the Government introduced a bill to deal with the rebellious province. The bill proposed in brief to suspend for a time the constitution of Lower Canada, and to send out from this country a governor-general and high commissioner, with full powers to deal with the rebellion, and to remodel the constitution of both provinces. There was an almost universal admission that the Government had found the right man when Lord John Russell mentioned the name of Lord Durham.

Lord Durham was a man of remarkable character. He belonged to one of the oldest families in England. The Lambtons had lived on their estate in the north, in uninterrupted succession, since the Conquest. The male succession, it is stated, never was interrupted since the twelfth century. They were not, however, a family of aristocrats. Their wealth was derived chiefly from coal-mines, and grew up in later days; the property at first, and for a long time, was of inconsiderable value. Lord Durham was born at Lambton Castle in April 1792. Before he was quite twenty years of age, he made a romantic marriage at Gretna Green with a lady who died three years after. About a year after the death of his first wife, he married the eldest daughter of Lord Grey. He was then only twenty-four years of age. He had before this been returned to Parliament for the county of Durham, and he soon distinguished himself as a very advanced and energetic reformer. While in the Commons he seldom addressed the House, but when he did speak, it was in support of some measure of reform, or against what he conceived to be antiquated and illiberal legislation. He brought out a plan of his own for Parliamentary reform in 1821. In 1828 he was raised to the peerage with the title of Baron Durham. When the Ministry of Lord Grey was formed, in November 1830, Lord Durham became Lord Privy Seal. He is said to have had an almost complete control over Lord Grey. He had an impassioned and energetic nature, which sometimes drove him into outbreaks of feeling which most of his colleagues

dreaded. He was thorough in his reforming purposes, and would have rushed at radical changes with scanty consideration for the time or for the temper of his opponents. He had very little reverence indeed for the majesty of custom. Whatever he wished he strongly wished. He had no idea of reticence, and cared not much for the decorum of office. He was one of the men who, even when they are thoroughly in the right, have often the unhappy art of seeming to put themselves completely in the wrong. None of his opponents, however, denied his great ability. He was never deterred by conventional beliefs and habits from looking boldly into the very heart of a great political difficulty. He was never afraid to propose what in times later than his have been called heroic remedies. There was a general impression, perhaps even among those who liked him least, that he was a sort of 'unemployed Cæsar,' a man who only required a field large enough to develop great qualities in the ruling of men. The difficulties in Canada seemed to have come as if expressly to give him an opportunity of proving himself all that his friends declared him to be, or of justifying for ever the distrust of his enemies. He went out to Canada with the assurance of everyone that his expedition would either make or mar a career, if not a country. Lord Durham found out a new alternative. He made a country and he marred a career. The mission of Lord Durham saved Canada. It ruined Lord Durham.

Lord Durham arrived in Quebec at the end of May, 1838. He at once issued a proclamation, in style like that of a dictator. It was not in any way unworthy of the occasion, which especially called for the intervention of a brave and enlightened dictatorship. He declared that he would unsparingly punish any who violated the laws, but he frankly invited the co-operation of the colonies to form a new system of government really suited to their wants and to the altering conditions of civilisation. Unfortunately he had hardly entered on his work of dictatorship when he found that he was no longer a dictator. In the passing of the Canada Bill through Parliament the powers which he understood were to be conferred upon him had been considerably reduced. Lord Durham went to work, however, as if he were still invested with absolute authority over all the laws and conditions of the colony. A very Cæsar laying down the lines for the future government of a province could hardly have been more boldly

arbitrary. Let it be said also that Lord Durham's arbitrariness was for the most part healthy in effect and just in spirit. But it gave an immense opportunity of attack on himself and on the Government to the enemies of both at home. Lord Durham had hardly begun his work of reconstruction when his recall was clamoured for by vehement voices in Parliament.

Lord Durham did not wait for the formal recall. He returned to England a disgraced man. Yet even then there was public spirit enough among the English people to refuse to ratify any sentence of disgrace upon him. When he landed at Plymouth, he was received with acclamations by the population, although the Government had prevented any of the official honour usually shown to returning governors from being offered to him.

Lord Durham's report was acknowledged by enemies as well as by the most impartial critics to be a masterly document. It laid the foundation of the political success and social prosperity not only of Canada but of all the other important colonies. After having explained in the most exhaustive manner the causes of discontent and backwardness in Canada, it went on to recommend that the government of the colony should be put as much as possible into the hands of the colonists themselves, that they themselves should execute as well as make the laws, the limit of the Imperial Government's interference being in such matters as affect the relations of the colony with the mother country, such as the constitution and form of government, the regulation of foreign relations and trade, and the disposal of the public lands. Lord Durham proposed to establish a thoroughly good system of municipal institutions; to secure the independence of the judges; to make all provincial officers, except the governor and his secretary, responsible to the Colonial Legislature; and to repeal all former legislation with respect to the reserves of land for the clergy. Finally, he proposed that the provinces of Canada should be reunited politically and should become one legislature, containing the representatives of both races and of all districts. It is significant that the report also recommended that in any Act to be introduced for this purpose, a provision should be made by which all or any of the other North American colonies should on the application of their legislatures and with the consent of Canada be admitted into the Canadian Union. In brief, Lord Durham proposed to make the Canadas self-governing as regards their internal affairs, and the germ of a federal union.

It is not necessary to describe in detail the steps by which the Government gradually introduced the recommendations of Lord Durham to Parliament and carried them to success. In 1840, however, the Act was passed which reunited Upper and Lower Canada on the basis proposed by Lord Durham. Lord Durham did not live to see the success of the policy he had recommended. Within a few days after the passing of the Canada Government Bill he died at Cowes, in the Isle of Wight, on July 28, 1840. He was then little more than forty-eight years of age. He had for some time been in failing health, and it cannot be doubted that the mortification attending his Canadian mission had worn away his strength. His proud and sensitive spirit could ill bear the contradictions and humiliations that had been forced upon him. He wanted to the success of his political career that proud patience which the gods are said to love, and by virtue of which great men live down misappreciation, and hold out until they see themselves justified and hear the reproaches turn into cheers. But if Lord Durham's personal career was in any way a failure, his policy for the Canadas was a splendid success. It established the principles of colonial government. There were defects in the construction of Lord Durham's scheme, but the success of his policy lay in the broad principles it laid down, and to which other colonial systems as well as that of the Dominion of Canada owe their strength and security to-day. One may say, with little help from the merely fanciful, that the rejoicings of emancipated colonies might have been in his dying ears as he sank into his early grave.

The Opium dispute with China was going on when the Queen came to the throne. The Opium War broke out soon after. Reduced to plain words, the principle for which we fought in the China War was the right of Great Britain to force a peculiar trade upon a foreign people in spite of the protestations of the Government and all such public opinion as there was of the nation.

The whole principle of Chinese civilisation, at the time when the Opium War broke out, was based on conditions which to any modern nation must seem erroneous and unreasonable. The Chinese Governments and people desired to have no political relations or dealings whatever with any other State. They were not so obstinately set against private and commercial dealings; but they would have no political intercourse with foreigners, and they would not even recognise the existence of foreign

peoples as States. They were perfectly satisfied with themselves and their own systems. The one thing which China asked of European civilisation and the movement called Modern Progress was to be let alone. The Chinese would much rather have lived without ever seeing the face of a foreigner. But they had put up with the private intrusion of foreigners and trade, and had had dealings with American traders and with the East India Company. The charter and the exclusive rights of the East India Company expired in April 1834; the charter was renewed under different conditions, and the trade with China was thrown open. One of the great branches of the East India Company's business with China was the opium trade. When the trading privileges ceased this traffic was taken up briskly by private merchants, who bought of the Company the opium which they grew in India and sold it to the Chinese. The Chinese Governments, and all teachers, moralists, and persons of education in China, had long desired to get rid of or put down this trade in opium. They considered it highly detrimental to the morals, the health, and the prosperity of the people. All traffic in opium was strictly forbidden by the Governments and laws of China. Yet our English traders carried on a brisk and profitable trade in the forbidden article. Nor was this merely an ordinary smuggling, or a business akin to that of the blockade running during the American civil war. The arrangements with the Chinese Government allowed the existence of all establishments and machinery for carrying on a general trade at Canton and Macao; and under cover of these arrangements the opium traders set up their regular head-quarters in these towns.

The English Government appointed superintendents to manage our commercial dealings with China. Misunderstandings occurred at every new step of negotiation. These misunderstandings were natural. Our people knew hardly anything about the Chinese. The limitation of our means of communication with them made this ignorance inevitable, but certainly did not excuse our acting as if we were in possession of the fullest and most accurate information.

The Chinese believed from the first that the superintendents were there merely to protect the opium trade, and to force on China political relations with the West. Practically this was the effect of their presence. The superintendents took no steps to aid the Chinese authorities in stopping the hated trade. The British traders naturally enough thought that the British Government were determined to protect them in carrying it on.

At length the English Government announced that 'her Majesty's Government could not interfere for the purpose of enabling British subjects to violate the laws of the country with which they trade;' and that 'any loss therefore which such persons may suffer in consequence of the more effectual execution of the Chinese laws on this subject must be borne by the parties who have brought that loss on themselves by their own acts.' This very wise and proper resolve came, however, too late. The British traders had been allowed to go on for a long time under the full conviction that the protection of the English Government was behind them and wholly at their service.

When the Chinese authorities actually proceeded to insist on the forfeiture of an immense quantity of opium in the hand of British traders, and took other harsh, but certainly not unnatural measures to extinguish the traffic, Captain Elliott, the chief superintendent, sent to the Governor of India a request for as many ships of war as could be spared for the protection of the life and property of Englishmen in China. Before long British ships arrived; and the two countries were at war.

It was easy work enough so far as England was concerned. It was on our side nothing but a succession of cheap victories. The Chinese fought very bravely in a great many instances; and they showed still more often a Spartan-like resolve not to survive defeat. When one of the Chinese cities was taken by Sir Hugh Gough, the Tartar general went into his house as soon as he saw that all was lost, made his servants set fire to the building, and calmly sat in his chair until he was burned to death. We quickly captured the island of Chusan, on the east coast of China; a part of our squadron went up the Peiho river to threaten the capital; negotiations were opened, and the preliminaries of a treaty were made out, to which, however, neither the English Government nor the Chinese would agree, and the war was reopened. Chusan was again taken by us; Ningpo, a large city a few miles in on the mainland, fell into our hands; Amoy, farther south, was captured; our troops were before Nankin, when the Chinese Government at last saw how futile was the idea of resisting our arms. They made peace at last on any terms we chose to ask. We asked in the first instance the cession in perpetuity to us of the island of Hong-Kong. Of course we got it. Then we asked that five ports, Canton, Amoy, Foo-Chow-Foo, Ningpo, and Shanghai should be thrown open to British traders, and that consuls should be established there. Needless to say that this too was

conceded. Then it was agreed that the indemnity already mentioned should be paid by the Chinese Government—some four millions and a half sterling, in addition to one million and a quarter as compensation for the destroyed opium. The Chinese war then was over for the time. But as the children say that snow brings more snow, so did that war with China bring other wars to follow it.

The Melbourne Ministry kept going from bad to worse. There was a great stirring in the country all around them, which made their feebleness the more conspicuous. Indeed the history of that time seems full of Reform projects. The Parliamentary annals contain the names of various measures of social and political improvement which might in themselves, it would seem, bear witness to the most unsleeping activity on the part of any Ministry. The appointment of the Committee of Council to deal with the elementary education of the poor; measures for general registration; for the reduction of the stamp duty on newspapers, and of the duty on paper; for the improvement of the gaol system; for the spread of vaccination; for the regulation of the labour of children; for the prohibition of the employment of any child or young person under twenty-one in the cleaning of chimneys by climbing; for the suppression of the punishment of the pillory; efforts to relieve the Jews from civil disabilities—these are but a few of the many projects of social and political reform that occupied the attention of that busy period which somehow appears nevertheless to have been so sleepy and do-nothing. How does it come about that we can regard the Ministry in whose time all these things were done or attempted as exhausted and worthless?

One answer is plain. The reforming energy was in the time, and not in the Ministry. There was a just and general conviction that if the Government were left to themselves they would do nothing. Whatever they undertook they seemed to undertake reluctantly, and as if only with the object of preventing other people from having anything to do with it. Naturally, therefore, they got little or no thanks for any good they might have done. When they brought in a measure to abolish in various cases the punishment of death, they fell so far behind public opinion and the inclinations of the Commission that had for eight years been inquiring into the state of our criminal law, that their bill only passed by very narrow majorities, and impressed many ardent reformers as if it were

meant rather to withhold than to advance a genuine reform. In truth it was a period of enthusiasm and of growth, and the Ministry did not understand this. Lord Melbourne had apparently got into his mind the conviction that the only sensible thing the people of England could do was to keep up the Melbourne Ministry, and that being a sensible people they would naturally do this. He had grown into something like the condition of a pampered old hall porter, who, dozing in his chair, begins to look on it as an act of rudeness if any visitor to his master presumes to knock at the door and so disturb him from his comfortable rest.

The operations which took place about this time in Syria had an important bearing on the relations between this country and France. Mohammed Ali, Pasha of Egypt, the most powerful of all the Sultan's feudatories, had made himself for a time master of Syria. By the aid of his adopted son, Ibrahim Pasha, he had defeated the armies of the Porte wherever he had encountered them. Mohammed's victories had for the time compelled the Porte to allow him to remain in power in Syria; but in 1839 the Sultan again declared war against Mohammed Ali. Ibrahim Pasha again obtained an overwhelming victory over the Turkish army. The energetic Sultan Mahmoud died suddenly; and immediately after his death the Capitan Pasha, or Lord High Admiral of the Ottoman fleet, went over to the Egyptians with all his vessels; an act of almost unexampled treachery even in the history of the Ottoman Empire. It was evident that Turkey was not able to hold her own against the formidable Mohammed and his successful son; and the policy of the Western Powers of Europe, and of England especially, had long been to maintain the Ottoman Empire as a necessary part of the common State system. The policy of Russia was to keep up that empire as long as it suited her own purposes; to take care that no other Power got anything out of Turkey; and to prepare the way for such a partition of the spoils of Turkey as would satisfy Russian interests. Russia therefore was to be found now defending Turkey, and now assailing her. The course taken by Russia was seemingly inconsistent; but it was only inconsistent as the course of a sailing ship may be which now tacks to this side and now to that, but has a clear object in view and a port to reach all the while. England was then and for a long time after steadily bent on preserving the Turkish Empire, and in a great measure as a rampart against the

schemes and ambitions imputed to Russia herself. France was less firmly set on the maintenance of Turkey; and France, moreover, had got into her mind that England had designs of her own on Egypt. Austria was disposed to go generally with England; Prussia was little more than a nominal sharer in the alliance that was now patched up. It is evident that such an alliance could not be very harmonious or direct in its action. It was, however, effective enough to prove too strong for the Pasha of Egypt. A fleet made up of English, Austrian and Turkish vessels bombarded Acre; an allied army drove the Egyptians from several of their strongholds. Ibrahim Pasha, with all his courage and genius, was not equal to the odds against which he now saw himself forced to contend. He had to succumb. Mohammed Ali was deprived of all his Asiatic possessions; but was secured in his government of Egypt by a convention signed at London on July 15, 1840, by the representatives of Great Britain, Austria, Prussia and Russia, on the one part, and of the Ottoman Porte on the other. The name of France was not found there. France had drawn back from the alliance, and for some time seemed as if she were likely to take arms against it. M. Thiers was then her Prime Minister: he was a man of quick fancy, restless and ambitious temperament. Thiers persuaded himself and the great majority of his countrymen that England was bent upon driving Mohammed Ali out of Egypt as well as out of Syria, and that her object was to obtain possession of Egypt for herself. For some months it seemed as if war were inevitable between England and France. Fortunately, the French King, Louis Philippe and the eminent statesman, M. Guizot, were both strongly in favour of peace; M. Thiers resigned; M. Guizot became Minister for Foreign Affairs, and virtually head of the Government, and on July 13, 1841, the Treaty of London was signed, which provided for the settlement of the affairs of Egypt on the basis of the arrangement already made, and which contained moreover a stipulation, by which the Sultan declared himself firmly resolved to maintain the ancient principle of his empire—that no foreign ship of war was to be admitted into the Dardanelles and the Bosphorus, with the exception of light vessels for which a firman was granted.

Steadily meanwhile did the Ministry go from bad to worse. They were remarkably bad administrators; their finances were wretchedly managed. The budget of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, Mr. Baring, showed a deficiency of nearly two

millions. This deficiency he proposed to meet in part by alteration in the sugar duties; but the House of Commons, after a long debate, rejected his proposals by a majority of thirty-six. It was then expected, of course, that ministers would resign; but they were not yet willing to accept the consequences of defeat. People began to ask, 'Will nothing then turn them out of office? Will they never have done with trying new tricks to keep in place?'

Sir Robert Peel took, in homely phrase, the bull by the horns. He proposed a direct vote of want of confidence—a resolution declaring that ministers did not possess the confidence of the House sufficiently to enable them to carry through the measures which they deemed of essential importance to the public welfare, and that their continuance in office under such circumstances was at variance with the spirit of the Constitution. On June 4, 1841, the division was taken; and the vote of no-confidence was carried by a majority of one. Even the Whigs could not stand this. Parliament was dissolved, and the result of the general election was that the Tories were found to have a majority even greater than they themselves had anticipated. The moment the new Parliament was assembled amendments to the address were carried in both Houses in a sense hostile to the Government. Lord Melbourne and his colleagues had to resign, and Sir Robert Peel was entrusted with the task of forming an administration.

We have no more to do with Lord Melbourne in this history. He merely drops out of it. Between his expulsion from office and his death, which took place in 1848, he did little or nothing to call for the notice of anyone. It was said at one time that his closing years were lonesome and melancholy; but this has lately been denied, and indeed it is not likely that one who had such a genial temper and so many friends could have been left to the dreariness of a not self-sufficing solitude and to the bitterness of neglect. He was a generous and kindly man; his personal character, although often assailed, was free of any serious reproach; he was a failure in office, not so much from want of ability, as because he was a politician without convictions.

The Peel Ministry came into power with great hopes. It had Lord Lyndhurst for Lord Chancellor; Sir James Graham for Home Secretary; Lord Aberdeen at the Foreign Office; Lord Stanley was Colonial Secretary. The most remarkable man not in the Cabinet, soon to be one of the foremost states-

men in the country, was Mr. W. E. Gladstone. It is a fact of some significance in the history of the Peel administration, that the elections which brought the new Ministry into power brought Mr. Cobden for the first time into the House of Commons.

While Lord Melbourne and his Whig colleagues, still in office, were fribbling away their popularity on the pleasant assumption that nobody was particularly in earnest about anything, the Vice-Chancellor and heads of houses held a meeting at Oxford, and passed a censure on the celebrated 'No. 90' of 'Tracts for the Times.' The author of the tract was Dr. John Henry Newman, and the principal ground for its censure by voices claiming authority was the principle it seemed to put forward—that a man might honestly subscribe all the articles and formularies of the English Church, while yet holding many of the doctrines of the Church of Rome, against which those articles were regarded as a necessary protest. The great movement which was thus brought into sudden question and publicity sprang from the desire to revive the authority of the Church; to quicken her with a new vitality; to give her once again that place as guide and inspirer of the national life which her ardent votaries believed to be hers by right, and to have been forfeited only by the carelessness of her authorities and their failure to fulfil the duties of her Heaven-assigned mission.

No movement could have had a purer source. None could have had more disinterested and high-minded promoters. It was borne in upon some earnest unresting souls, like that of the sweet and saintly Keble, that the Church of England had higher duties and nobler claims than the business of preaching harmless sermons and the power of enriching bishops. Keble urged on some of the more vigorous and thoughtful minds around him by his influence and his example, that they should reclaim for the Church the place which ought to be hers, as the true successor of the Apostles. Among those who shared the spirit and purpose of Keble were Richard Hurrell Froude, the historian's elder brother, who gave rich promise of a splendid career, but who died while still in comparative youth; Dr. Pusey, afterwards leader of the school of ecclesiasticism which bears his name; and, most eminent of all, Dr. Newman. Newman had started the publication of a series of treatises called 'Tracts for the Times,' to vindicate the real mission of the Church of England, and

wrote the most remarkable of them. This was the Tractarian movement, which had such various and memorable results. Newman had up to this time been distinguished as one of the most unsparing enemies of Rome. He had never had any manner of association with Roman Catholics; had in fact known singularly little of them. At this time the idea of leaving the Church never, Dr. Newman himself assures us, had crossed his imagination.

The abilities of Dr. Newman were hardly surpassed by any contemporary in any department of thought. His position and influence in Oxford were almost unique. There was in his intellectual temperament a curious combination of the mystic and the logical. England in our time has hardly had a greater master of argument and of English prose than Newman. He is one of the keenest of dialecticians. His words dispel mists; and whether they who listen agree or not, they cannot fail to understand. A penetrating poignant satirical humour is found in most of his writings; an irony sometimes piercing suddenly through it like a darting pain. On the other hand, a generous vein of poetry and of pathos informs his style; and there are many passages of his works in which he rises to the height of a genuine and noble eloquence.

In all the arts that make a great preacher or orator, Newman was strikingly deficient. His manner was constrained, ungraceful and even awkward; his voice was thin and weak. His bearing was not at first impressive in any way. A gaunt, emaciated figure, a sharp and eagle face, a cold, meditative eye rather repelled than attracted those who saw him for the first time. Singularly devoid of affectation, Newman did not always conceal his intellectual scorn of men who made loud pretence with inferior gifts, and the men must have been few indeed whose gifts were not inferior to his. Newman had no scorn for intellectual inferiority in itself; he despised it only when it gave itself airs. His influence while he was the vicar of St. Mary's at Oxford was profound. No opponent ever spoke of Newman but with admiration for his intellect and respect for his character. Dr. Newman had a younger brother, Francis W. Newman, who also possessed remarkable ability and earnestness. He too was distinguished at Oxford, and seemed to have a great career there before him. But he was drawn one way by the wave of thought before his more famous brother had been drawn the other way. In 1830, the younger Newman found himself prevented by

religious scruples from subscribing the Thirty-nine Articles for his master's degree. He left the university, and wandered for years in the East, endeavouring, not very successfully perhaps, to teach Christianity on its broadest base to Mahometans; and then he came back to England to take his place among the leaders of a certain school of free thought.

When Dr. Newman wrote the famous Tract 'No. 90,' for which he was censured, he bowed to the authority of his bishop. But he did not admit any change of opinion; and indeed soon after the gradual working of Newman's mind became evident to all the world. The brightest and most penetrating intellect in the Church of England was withdrawn from her service, and Newman went over to the Church of Rome. To this result had the inquiry conducted him which had led his friend Dr. Pusey merely to endeavour to incorporate some of the mysticism and the symbols of Rome with the ritual of the English Protestant Church; which had brought Keble only to seek a more liberal and truly Christian temper for the faith of the Protestant; and which had sent Francis Newman into Radicalism and Rationalism.

Still greater was the practical importance, at least in defined results, of the movement which went on in Scotland about the same time.

The case was briefly this. During the reign of Queen Anne an Act was passed which took from the Church courts in Scotland the free choice as to the appointment of pastors by subjecting the power of the presbytery to the control and interference of the law courts. In an immense number of Scotch parishes the minister was nominated by a lay patron; and if the presbytery found nothing to condemn in him as to 'life, literature and doctrine,' they were compelled to appoint him, however unwelcome he might be to the parishioners. Now it is obvious that a man might have a blameless character, sound religious views, and an excellent education, and nevertheless be totally unfitted to undertake the charge of a Scottish parish. The effect of the power conferred on the law courts and the patron was simply in a great number of cases to send families away from the Church of Scotland and into voluntaryism.

Dr. Chalmers became the leader of the movement which was destined within two years from the time we are now surveying to cause the disruption of the ancient Kirk of Scotland. No man could be better fitted for the task of

leadership in such a movement. He was beyond comparison the foremost man in the Scottish Church. He was the greatest pulpit orator in Scotland, or, indeed, in Great Britain. As a writer on political economy he had made a distinct mark. From having been in his earlier days the minister of an obscure Scottish village congregation, he had suddenly sprung into fame. He was the lion of any city which he happened to visit. If he preached in London, the church was crowded with the leaders of politics, science and fashion, eager to hear him. Chalmers spoke with a massive eloquence in keeping with his powerful frame and his broad brow and his commanding presence. His speeches were a strenuous blending of argument and emotion. They appealed at once to the strong common sense and to the deep religious convictions of his Scottish audiences. His whole soul was in his work as a leader of religious movements. He cared little or nothing for any popularity or fame that he might have won. The Free Church of Scotland is his monument. He did not make that Church. It was not the work of one man, or, strictly speaking, of one generation. It grew naturally out of the inevitable struggle between Church and State. But Chalmers did more than any other man to decide the moment and the manner of its coming into existence, and its success is his best monument.

On May 18, 1843, some five hundred ministers of the Church of Scotland, under the leadership of Dr. Chalmers, seceded from the old Kirk and set about to form the Free Church. The Government of Sir Robert Peel had made a weak effort at compromise by legislative enactment, but had declined to introduce any legislation which should free the Kirk of Scotland from the control of the civil courts, and there was no course for those who held the views of Dr. Chalmers but to withdraw from the Church which admitted that claim of State control. The history of Scotland is illustrated by many great national deeds. No deed it tells of surpasses in dignity and in moral grandeur that secession—to cite the words of the protest—'from an Establishment which we loved and prized, through interference with conscience, the dishonour done to Christ's crown, and the rejection of his sole and supreme authority as King in his Church.'

CHAPTER III.

DECLINE AND FALL OF THE MELBOURNE MINISTRY.

MEANWHILE things were looking ill with the Melbourne Ministry. The Jamaica Bill put them in great perplexity. This was a measure brought in on April 9, 1839, to make temporary provision for the government of the island of Jamaica, by setting aside the House of Assembly for five years, and during that time empowering the governor and council with three salaried commissioners to manage the affairs of the colony. In other words, the Melbourne Ministry proposed to suspend for five years the constitution of Jamaica. No body of persons can be more awkwardly placed than a Whig Ministry proposing to set aside a constitutional government anywhere. Such a proposal may be a necessary measure ; it may be unavoidable ; but it always comes with a bad grace from Whigs or Liberals, and gives their enemies a handle against them which they cannot fail to use to some purpose.

In the case of the Jamaica Bill there was some excuse for the harsh policy. After the abolition of slavery, the former masters in the island found it very hard to reconcile themselves to the new condition of things. They could not all at once understand that their former slaves were to be their equals before the law. On the other hand, some of the Jamaica negroes were too ignorant to understand that they had acquired any rights ; others were a little too clamorous in their assertion. The Imperial governors and officials were generally and justly eager to protect the negroes ; and the result was a constant quarrel between the Jamaica House of Assembly and the representatives of the Home Government. A bill, very necessary in itself, was passed by the Imperial Parliament for the better regulation of prisons in Jamaica, and the House of Assembly refused to submit to any such legislation. Under these circumstances the Melbourne Ministry proposed the suspension of the constitution of the island. The measure was opposed not only by Peel and the Conservatives, but by many Radicals. The Ministry only had a majority of five in favour of their measure. This, of course, was a virtual defeat. The Ministry acknowledged it and resigned. Their defeat was a humiliation ; their resignation an inevitable submission ; but they came back to office almost immediately under conditions

that made the humiliation more humbling, and rendered their subsequent career more difficult by far than their past struggle for existence had been.

The famous controversy known as the 'Bedchamber Question' made a way back for the Whigs into place. Gulliver ought to have had an opportunity of telling such a story to the king of the Brobdingnagians, in order the better to impress him with a clear idea of the logical beauty of constitutional government. When Lord Melbourne resigned, the Queen sent for Peel, and told him with a simple and girlish frankness that she was sorry to have to part with her late ministers, of whose conduct she entirely approved, but that she bowed to constitutional usage. This must have been rather an astonishing beginning to the grave and formal Peel; but he was not a man to think any worse of the candid young Sovereign for her outspoken ways. The negotiations went on very smoothly as to the colleagues Peel meant to recommend to her Majesty, until he happened to notice the composition of the royal household as regarded the ladies most closely in attendance on the Queen. For example, he found that the wife of Lord Normanby and the sister of Lord Morpeth were the two ladies in closest attendance on her Majesty. Now it has to be borne in mind—it was proclaimed again and again during the negotiations—that the chief difficulty of the Conservatives would necessarily be in Ireland, where their policy would be altogether opposed to that of the Whigs. Lord Normanby had been Lord Lieutenant of Ireland under the Whigs, and Lord Morpeth, the amiable and accomplished Lord Carlisle of later time, Irish Secretary. It certainly could not be satisfactory for Peel to try to work a new Irish policy while the closest household companions of the Queen were the wife and sister of the displaced statesmen who directly represented the policy he had to supersede. Had this point of view been made clear to the Sovereign at first, it is hardly possible that any serious difficulty could have arisen. The Queen must have seen the obvious reasonableness of Peel's request; nor is it to be supposed that the two ladies in question could have desired to hold their places under such circumstances. But unluckily some misunderstanding took place at the very beginning of the conversations on this point. Peel only desired to press for the retirement of the ladies holding the higher offices; he did not intend to ask for any change affecting a place lower in official rank than that of lady of the bedchamber. But somehow or other he conveyed to the mind of the Queen a

different idea. She thought he meant to insist, as a matter of principle, upon the removal of all her familiar attendants and household associates. Under this impression she consulted Lord John Russell, who advised her on what he understood to be the state of the facts. On his advice the Queen stated in reply that she could not 'consent to a course which she conceives to be contrary to usage and is repugnant to her feelings.' Sir Robert Peel held firm to his stipulation; and the chance of his then forming a Ministry was at an end. Lord Melbourne and his colleagues had to be recalled; and at a Cabinet meeting they adopted a minute declaring it reasonable 'that the great offices of the Court and situations in the household held by members of Parliament should be included in the political arrangements made on a change in the Administration; but they are not of opinion that a similar principle should be applied or extended to the offices held by ladies in her Majesty's household.'

In the country the incident created great excitement. Some Liberals bluntly insisted that it was not right in such a matter to consult the feelings of the Sovereign at all, and that the advice of the minister, and his idea of what was for the good of the country, ought alone to be considered. Nothing could be more undesirable than the position in which Lord Melbourne and his colleagues had allowed the Sovereign to place herself. The more people in general came to think over the matter, the more clearly it was seen that Peel was in the right, although he had not made himself understood at first, and had, perhaps, not shown all through enough of consideration for the novelty of the young Sovereign's position. But no one could deliberately maintain the position at first taken up by the Whigs; and in point of fact they were soon glad to drop it as quickly and quietly as possible. The whole question, it may be said at once, was afterwards settled by a sensible compromise. It was agreed that on a change of Ministry the Queen would listen to any representation from the incoming Prime Minister as to the composition of her household, and would arrange for the retirement 'of their own accord' of any ladies who were so closely related to the leaders of Opposition as to render their presence inconvenient. The Whigs came back to office utterly discredited. They had to tinker up somehow a new Jamaica Bill. They had declared that they could not remain in office unless they were allowed to deal in a certain way with Jamaica; and now that they

were back again in office, they could not avoid trying to do something with the Jamaica business. They therefore introduced a new bill which was a mere compromise put together in the hope of its being allowed to pass. It was allowed to pass, after a fashion; that is, when the Opposition in the House of Lords had tinkered it and amended it at their pleasure. The bedchamber question in fact had thrown Jamaica out of perspective. The unfortunate island must do the best it could now; in this country statesmen had graver matters to think of. Sir Robert Peel could not govern with Lady Normanby; the Whigs would not govern without her.

The Melbourne Government were prejudiced in the public mind by these events, and by the attacks for which they gave so large an opportunity. The feeling in some parts of the country was still sentimentally with the Queen. At many a dinner-table it became the fashion to drink the health of her Majesty with a punning addition, not belonging to an order of wit any higher than that which in other days toasted the King 'over the water;' or prayed of heaven to 'send this crumb well down.' The Queen was toasted as the sovereign of spirit who 'would not let her belles be peeled.' But the Ministry were almost universally believed to have placed themselves in a ridiculous light, and to have crept again into office 'behind the petticoats of the ladies in waiting.'

On January 16, 1840, the Queen, opening Parliament in person, announced her intention to marry her cousin, Prince Albert of Saxe-Coburg-Gotha—a step which she trusted would be 'conducive to the interests of my people as well as to my own domestic happiness.' In the discussion which followed in the House of Commons, Sir Robert Peel observed that her Majesty had 'the singular good fortune to be able to gratify her private feelings, while she performs her public duty, and to obtain the best guarantee for happiness by contracting an alliance founded on affection.' Peel spoke the simple truth; it was indeed a marriage founded on affection. No marriage contracted in the humblest class could have been more entirely a union of love, and more free from what might be called selfish and worldly considerations. The Queen had for a long time loved her cousin. He was nearly her own age, the Queen being the elder by three months and two or three days. Francis Charles Augustus Albert Emmanuel was the full name of the young Prince. He was the second son of Ernest, Duke

of Saxe-Coburg-Saalfeld, and of his wife Louisa, daughter of Augustus, Duke of Saxe-Gotha-Altenburg. Prince Albert was born at the Rosenau, one of his father's residences, near Coburg, on August 26, 1819.

Prince Albert was a young man to win the heart of any girl. He was singularly handsome, graceful and gifted. In princes, as we know, a small measure of beauty and accomplishment suffices to throw courtiers and court ladies into transports of admiration; but had Prince Albert been the son of a farmer or a butler, he must have been admired for his singular personal attractions. He had had a sound and a varied education. He had been brought up as if he were to be a professional musician, a professional chemist or botanist, and a professor of history and belles lettres and the fine arts. The scientific and the literary were remarkably blended in his bringing-up. He had begun to study the constitutional history of States, and was preparing himself to take an interest in politics. There was much of the practical and business-like about him, as he showed in after-life; he loved farming, and took a deep interest in machinery and in the growth of industrial science. His tastes were for a quiet, domestic and unostentatious life—a life of refined culture, of happy calm evenings, of art and poetry and genial communion with Nature. He was made happy by the songs of birds, and delighted in sitting alone and playing the organ. But there was in him too a great deal of the political philosopher. He loved to hear political and other questions well argued out, and once observed that a false argument jarred on his nerves as much as a false note in music. He seems to have had from his youth an all-pervading sense of duty. So far as we can guess, he was almost absolutely free from the ordinary follies, not to say sins, of youth. Young as he was when he married the Queen, he devoted himself at once to what he conscientiously believed to be the duties of his station with a self-control and self-devotion rare even among the aged, and almost unknown in youth. He gave up every habit, however familiar and dear, every predilection, no matter how sweet, every indulgence of sentiment or amusement, that in any way threatened to interfere with the steadfast performance of the part he had assigned to himself. No man ever devoted himself more faithfully to the difficult duties of a high and new situation, or kept more strictly to his resolve. It was no task to him to be a tender husband and a loving father. This was a part of his sweet, pure and affectionate

nature. It may well be doubted whether any other queen ever had a married life so happy as that of Queen Victoria.

The marriage of the Queen and the Prince took place on February 10, 1840. The reception given by the people in general to the Prince on his landing in England a few days before the ceremony, and on the day of the marriage, was cordial and even enthusiastic. But it is not certain whether there was a very cordial feeling to the Prince among all classes of politicians. A rumour of the most absurd kind had got abroad in certain circles that Prince Albert was not a Protestant—that he was in fact a member of the Church of Rome. Somewhat unfortunately, the declaration of the intended marriage to the Privy Council did not mention the fact that Albert was a Protestant Prince. The result was that in the debate on the address in the House of Lords, an unseemly altercation took place, an altercation the more to be regretted because it might have been so easily spared. The question was bluntly raised by no less a person than the Duke of Wellington whether the future husband of the Queen was or was not a Protestant. The Duke actually charged the Ministry with having purposely left out the word 'Protestant' in the announcements in order that they might not offend their Irish and Catholic supporters, and moved that the word 'Protestant' be inserted in the congratulatory address to the Queen, and he carried his point, although Lord Melbourne held to the opinion that the word was unnecessary in describing a Prince who was not only a Protestant but descended from the most Protestant family in Europe. The lack of judgment and tact on the part of the Ministry was never more clearly shown than in the original omission of the word.

A few months after the marriage, a bill was passed naming Prince Albert Regent in the possible event of the death of the Queen, leaving issue. The passing of this bill was naturally regarded as of much importance to Prince Albert. It gave him to some extent the status in the country which he had not had before. No one could have started with a more resolute determination to stand clear of party politics than Prince Albert. He accepted at once his position as the husband of the Queen of a constitutional country. His own idea of his duty was that he should be the private secretary and unofficial counsellor of the Queen. To this purpose he devoted himself unswervingly. Outside that part of his duties, he constituted himself a sort of minister without portfolio of art and educa-

tion. He took an interest, and often a leading part, in all projects and movements relating to the spread of education, the culture of art, and the promotion of industrial science. Yet it was long before he was thoroughly understood by the country. It was long before he became in any degree popular, and it may be doubted whether he ever was thoroughly and generally popular. Not perhaps until his untimely death did the country find out how entirely disinterested and faithful his life had been, and how he had made the discharge of duty his business and his task. Prince Albert had not the ways of an Englishman, and the tendency of Englishmen, then as now, was to assume that to have manners other than those of an Englishman was to be so far unworthy of confidence. He was not made to shine in commonplace society. He could talk admirably about something, but he had not the gift of talking about nothing, and probably would not have cared much to cultivate such a faculty. He was fond of suggesting small innovations and improvements in established systems, to the annoyance of men with set ideas, who liked their own ways best. Thus it happened that he remained for many years, if not exactly unappreciated, yet not thoroughly appreciated, and that a considerable and very influential section of society was always ready to cavil at what he said, and find motive for suspicion in most things that he did. Perhaps he was best understood and most cordially appreciated among the poorer classes of his wife's subjects. He found also more cordial approval generally among the Radicals than among the Tories, or even the Whigs.

One reform which Prince Albert worked earnestly to bring about, was the abolition of duelling in the army. Nothing can testify more strikingly to the rapid growth of a genuine civilisation in Queen Victoria's reign than the utter discontinuance of the duelling system. When the Queen came to the throne, and for years after, it was still in full force. The duel plays a conspicuous part in the fiction and the drama of the Sovereign's earlier years. It was a common incident of all political controversies. It was an episode of most contested elections. It was often resorted to for the purpose of deciding the right or wrong of a half-drunken quarrel over a card table. It formed as common a theme of gossip as an elopement or a bankruptcy. Most of the eminent statesmen who were prominent in the earlier part of the Queen's reign had fought duels. At the present hour a duel in England would seem as absurd and barbarous an anachronism as an ordeal by touch or a witch-burning.

This is perhaps as suitable a place as any other to introduce some notice of the attempts that were made from time to time upon the life of the Queen. It is proper to say something of them, although not one possessed the slightest political importance, or could be said to illustrate anything more than sheer lunacy, or that morbid vanity and thirst for notoriety that is nearly akin to genuine madness. The first attempt was made on June 10, 1840, by Edward Oxford, a potboy of seventeen, who fired two shots at the Queen as she was driving up Constitution Hill with Prince Albert, but happily missed in each case. The jury pronounced him insane, and he was ordered to be kept in a lunatic asylum during her Majesty's pleasure. On May 30, 1842, a man named John Francis, son of a machinist in Drury Lane, fired a pistol at the Queen as she was driving down Constitution Hill, on the very spot where Oxford's attempt was made. Francis was sentenced to death, but her Majesty herself was anxious that the death-sentence should not be carried into effect, and it was finally commuted to one of transportation for life. The very day after this mitigation of punishment became publicly known another attempt was made by a hunch-backed lad named Bean, as the Queen was passing from Buckingham Palace to the Chapel Royal. The ambition which fired most or all of the miscreants who thus disturbed the Queen and the country was that of the mountebank rather than of the assassin. A bill was introduced by Sir Robert Peel making such attempts punishable by transportation for seven years, or by imprisonment for a term not exceeding three years, 'the culprit to be publicly or privately whipped as often and in such manner as the court shall direct, not exceeding thrice.' Bean was convicted under this act and sentenced to eighteen months' imprisonment in Millbank Penitentiary. This did not, however, conclude the attacks on the Queen. An Irish bricklayer, named Hamilton, fired a pistol, charged only with powder, at her Majesty, on Constitution Hill, on May 19, 1849, and was sentenced to seven years' transportation. A man named Robert Pate, once a lieutenant of hussars, struck her Majesty on the face with a stick as she was leaving the Duke of Cambridge's residence in her carriage on May 27, 1850. This man was sentenced to seven years' transportation, but the judge paid so much attention to the plea of insanity set up on his behalf, as to omit from his punishment the whipping which might have been ordered. On February 29, 1872, a lad of seventeen, named

Arthur O'Connor, presented a pistol at the Queen as she was entering Buckingham Palace after a drive. The pistol, however, proved to be unloaded—an antique and useless or harmless weapon, with a flint lock which was broken, and in the barrel a piece of greasy red rag. The wretched lad held a paper in one hand which was found to be some sort of petition on behalf of the Fenian prisoners. He was sentenced to twelve months' imprisonment and a whipping. Ten years later, on March 2, 1882, a man named Roderick Maclean fired at and missed the Queen as she was driving from the railway station at Windsor. Maclean was found to be a person of weak intellect who had at one time been positively insane, and the attempt had no political significance whatever.

CHAPTER IV.

THE AFGHAN WAR.

THE earliest days of the Peel Ministry fell upon trouble, not indeed at home, but abroad. At home the prospect still seemed bright. The birth of the Queen's eldest son was an event welcomed by national congratulation. There was still great distress in the agricultural districts; but there was a general confidence that the financial genius of Peel would quickly find some way to make burdens light, and that the condition of things all over the country would begin to mend. It was a region far removed from the knowledge and the thoughts of most Englishmen that supplied the news now beginning to come into England day after day, and to thrill the country with the tale of one of the greatest disasters to English policy and English arms to be found in all the record of our dealings with the East.

News travelled slowly then; and it was quite in the ordinary course of things that some part of the empire might be torn with convulsion for months before London knew that the even and ordinary condition of things had been disturbed. In this instance, the rejoicings at the accession of the young Queen were still going on, when a series of events had begun in Central Asia destined to excite the profoundest emotion in England, and to exercise the most powerful influence upon our foreign policy down to the present hour. On September

20, 1837, Captain Alexander Burnes arrived at Cabul, the capital of the state of Cabul, in the north of Afghanistan. Burnes was a famous Orientalist and traveller; he had conducted an expedition into Central Asia; had published his travels in Bokhara, and had been sent on a mission by the Indian Government, in whose service he was, to study the navigation of the Indus. The object of his journey to Cabul in 1837 was to enter into commercial relations with Dost Mahomed, then ruler of Cabul, and with other chiefs of the western regions.

The great region of Afghanistan has been called the land of transition between Eastern and Western Asia. All the great ways that lead from Persia to India pass through that region. There is a proverb which declares that no one can be king of Hindostan without first becoming lord of Cabul. The Afghans are the ruling nation, but among them had long been settled Hindoos, Arabs, Armenians, Abyssinians, and men of other races and religions. The founder of the Afghan empire, Ahmed Shah, died in 1773. He had made an empire which stretched from Herat on the west to Sirhind on the east, and from the Oxus and Cashmere on the north to the Arabian Sea and the mouths of the Indus on the south. The death of his son, Timur Shah, delivered the kingdom up to the hostile factions, intrigues and quarrels of his sons; the leaders of a powerful tribe, the Barukzyes, took advantage of the events that arose out of this condition of things to dethrone the descendants of Ahmed Shah. When Captain Burnes visited Afghanistan in 1832, the only part of all their great inheritance which yet remained with the descendants of Ahmed Shah was the principality of Herat. The remainder of Afghanistan was parcelled out between Dost Mahomed and his brothers. Dost Mahomed was a man of extraordinary ability and energy. Although he was a usurper he was a sincere lover of his country, and on the whole a wise and just ruler. When Captain Burnes visited Dost Mahomed, Dost Mahomed professed to be a sincere friend of the English Government and people. There was, however, at that time a quarrel going on between the Shah of Persia and the Prince of Herat, the last enthroned representative, as has been already said, of the great family on whose fall Dost Mahomed and his brothers had mounted into power. The strong impression at the time in England, and among the authorities in India, was that Persia herself was but a puppet in the hands of Russia, and that the attack on

Herat was the first step of a great movement of Russia towards our Indian dominion.

Undoubtedly Russia did set herself for some reason to win the friendship and alliance of Dost Mahomed; and Captain Burnes was for his part engaged in the same endeavour. Burnes always insisted that Dost Mahomed himself was sincerely anxious to become an ally of England, and that he offered more than once on his own free part to dismiss the Russian agents even without seeing them, if Burnes desired him to do so. But for some reason Burnes's superiors had the profoundest distrust of Dost Mahomed. It was again and again impressed on Burnes that he must regard Dost Mahomed as a treacherous enemy and as a man playing the part of Persia and of Russia.

Captain Burnes then was placed in the painful difficulty of having to carry out a policy of which he entirely disapproved. He believed in Dost Mahomed as a friend, and he was ordered to regard him as an enemy. On the other hand, Dost Mahomed was placed in a position of great difficulty and danger. If England would not support him, he must for his own safety find alliances elsewhere; in Russian statecraft for example. Runjeet Singh, the daring and successful adventurer who had annexed the whole province of Cashmere to his dominions, was the enemy of Dost Mahomed and the faithful ally of England. Dost Mahomed thought the British Government could assist him in coming to terms with Runjeet Singh, and Burnes had assured him that the British Government would do all it could to establish satisfactory terms of peace between Afghanistan and the Punjaub, over which Runjeet Singh ruled. Burnes, however, was unable to impress his superiors with any belief either in Dost Mahomed or in the policy which he himself advocated. The English Government had presented to the House of Commons his despatches in so mutilated and altered a form, that Burnes was made to seem as if he actually approved and recommended the policy which he especially warned us to avoid. The result was that Lord Auckland, the Governor-General of India, at length resolved to treat Dost Mahomed as an enemy, and to drive him from Cabul. Lord Auckland, therefore, entered into a treaty with Runjeet Singh and Shah Soojah-ool-Moolk, the exiled representative of what we may call the legitimist rulers of Afghanistan, for the restoration of the latter to the throne of his ancestors, and for the destruction of the power of Dost Mahomed.

Shah Soojah-ool-Moolk was at the time living in exile, without the faintest hope of ever again being restored to his dominions. We pulled the poor man out of his obscurity, told him that his people were yearning for him, and that we would set him on his throne once more.

We conquered Dost Mahomed and dethroned him. He made a bold and brilliant, sometimes even a splendid resistance. As we approached Cabul, Dost Mahomed abandoned his capital and fled with a few horsemen across the Indus. Shah Soojah entered Cabul accompanied by the British officers. It was to have been a triumphal entry. The hearts of those who believed in his cause must have sunk within them when they saw how the Shah was received by the people. The city received him in sullen silence. Few of its people condescended even to turn out to see him as he passed. The vast majority stayed away and disdained even to look at him. One would have thought that the least observant eye must have seen that his throne could not last a moment longer than the time during which the strength of Britain was willing to support it. The British army, however, withdrew, leaving only a contingent of some eight thousand men, besides the Shah's own hirelings, to maintain him for the present. Sir W. Macnaghten seems to have really believed that the work was done, and that Shah Soojah was as safe on his throne as Queen Victoria. He was destined to be very soon and very cruelly undeceived.

Dost Mahomed made more than one effort to regain his place. He invaded Shah Soojah's dominions, and on November 2, 1840, he won the admiration of the English themselves by the brilliant stand he made against them. In this battle of Purwandurrah victory might not unreasonably have been claimed for Dost Mahomed. But Dost Mahomed had the wisdom of a statesman as well as the genius of a soldier. He knew well that he could not hold out against the strength of England. The evening after his brilliant exploit in the field Dost Mahomed rode quietly up to the quarters of Sir W. Macnaghten, announced himself as Dost Mahomed, tendered to the envoy the sword that had flashed so splendidly across the field of the previous day's fight, and surrendered himself a prisoner. His sword was returned; he was treated with all honour; and a few days afterwards he was sent to India, where a residence and a revenue were assigned to him.

But the withdrawal of Dost Mahomed from the scene did nothing to secure the reign of the unfortunate Shah Soojah.

Sir W. Macnaghten was warned of danger, but seemed to take no heed. Some fatal blindness appears to have suddenly fallen on the eyes of our people in Cabul. On November 2, 1841, an insurrection broke out. Sir Alexander Burnes lived in the city itself; Sir W. Macnaghten and the military commander, Major-General Elphinstone, were with the troops in cantonments at some little distance outside the city. The insurrection might have been put down in the first instance easily, but it was allowed to grow up without attempt at control. Sir Alexander Burnes could not be got to believe that it was anything serious even when a fanatical and furious mob were besieging his own house. The fanatics were especially bitter against Burnes, because they believed that he had been guilty of treachery. They accused him of having pretended to be the friend of Dost Mahomed, deceived him, and brought the English into the country. To the last Burnes refused to believe that he was in danger. He harangued the raging mob, and endeavoured to bring them to reason. He was murdered in the tumult. He and his brother and all those with them were hacked to pieces with Afghan knives. He was only in his thirty-seventh year when he was murdered. Fate seldom showed with more strange and bitter malice her proverbial irony than when she made him the first victim of the policy adopted in despite of his best advice and his strongest warnings.

The murder of Burnes was only a beginning. The whole country threw itself into insurrection. The Afghans attacked the cantonments and actually compelled the English to abandon the forts in which all our commissariat was stored. We were thus threatened with famine even if we could resist the enemy in arms. We were strangely unfortunate in our civil and military leaders. Sir W. Macnaghten was a man of high character and good purpose, but he was weak and credulous. The commander, General Elphinstone, was old, infirm, tortured by disease, broken down both in mind and body, incapable of forming a purpose of his own, or of holding to one suggested by anybody else. His second in command was a far stronger and abler man, but unhappily the two could never agree.

A new figure appeared on the scene, a dark and a fierce apparition. This was Akbar Khan, the favourite son of Dost Mahomed. He was a daring, a clever, an unscrupulous young man. From the moment when he entered Cabul he became

the real leader of the insurrection against Shah Soojah and us. Macnaghten, persuaded by the military commander that the position of things was hopeless, consented to enter into negotiations with Akbar Khan. Akbar Khan received him at first with contemptuous insolence—as a haughty conqueror receives some ignoble and humiliated adversary. It was agreed that the British troops should quit Afghanistan at once; that Dost Mahomed and his family should be sent back to Afghanistan; that on his return the unfortunate Shah Soojah should be allowed to take himself off to India or where he would; and that some British officers should be left at Cabul as hostages for the fulfilment of the conditions.

The evacuation did not take place at once, although the fierce winter was setting in, and the snow was falling heavily, ominously. On both sides there were dallyings and delays. At last Akbar Khan made a new and startling proposition to our envoy. It was that they two should enter into a secret treaty, should unite their arms against the other chiefs, and should keep Shah Soojah on the throne as nominal king, with Akbar Khan as his vizier. Macnaghten caught at the proposals. He had entered into terms of negotiation with the Afghan chiefs together; he now consented to enter into a secret treaty with one of the chiefs to turn their joint arms against the others. It would be idle and shameful to attempt to defend such a policy. When every excuse has been thought of, we must still be glad to believe that there are not many Englishmen who would, under any circumstances, have consented even to give a hearing to the proposals of Akbar Khan.

Macnaghten's error was dearly expiated. He went out at noon next day to confer with Akbar Khan on the banks of the neighbouring river. Three of his officers were with him. Akbar Khan was ominously surrounded by friends and retainers. Not many words were spoken; the expected conference had hardly begun when a signal was given or an order issued by Akbar Khan, and the envoy and the officers were suddenly seized from behind. A scene of wild confusion followed, in which hardly anything is clear and certain but the one most horrible incident. The envoy struggled with Akbar Khan, who had himself seized Macnaghten; Akbar Khan drew from his belt one of a pair of pistols which Macnaghten had presented to him a short time before, and shot him through the body. The fanatics who were crowding round hacked the body to pieces with their knives. Of the

three officers one was killed on the spot; the other two were forced to mount Afghan horses and carried away as prisoners.

It seems certain that the treachery of Akbar, base as it was, did not contemplate more than the seizure of the envoy and his officers. On the fatal day the latter resisted and struggled; Akbar Khan heard a cry of alarm that the English soldiers were coming out of cantonments to rescue the envoy; and, wild with passion, he suddenly drew his pistol and fired. This was the statement made again and again by Akbar Khan himself. The explanation does not much relieve the darkness of Akbar Khan's character. There is not the slightest reason to suppose that he would have shrunk from any treachery or any cruelty which served his purpose. But it is well to bear in mind that poor Macnaghten would not have been murdered had he not consented to meet Akbar Khan and treat with him on a proposition to which an English official should never have listened.

The little English force in the cantonments did not know until the following day that any calamity had befallen the envoy. On December 24, 1841, came a letter from one of the officers seized by Akbar Khan, accompanying proposals for a treaty from the Afghan chiefs. It is hard now to understand how any English officers could have consented to enter into terms with the murderers of Macnaghten before his mangled body could well have ceased to bleed. We can all see the difficulty of their position. General Elphinstone and his second in command, Brigadier Shelton, were convinced that it would be equally impossible to stay where they were or to cut their way through the Afghans. But it might have occurred to many that they were nevertheless not bound to treat with the Afghans; that they were not ordered by fate to accept whatever the conquerors chose to offer. One English officer of mark did counsel his superiors in this spirit. This was Major Eldred Pottinger. Pottinger was for cutting their way through all enemies and difficulties as far as they could, and then occupying the ground with their dead bodies. But his advice was hardly taken into consideration. It was determined to treat with the Afghans; and treating with the Afghans now meant accepting any terms the Afghans chose to impose on their fallen enemies. In the negotiations that went on some written documents were exchanged. One of these, drawn up by the English negotiators, contains an appeal to the Afghan conquerors which we believe to be

absolutely unique in the history of British dealings with armed enemies. 'In friendship, kindness and consideration are necessary, not overpowering the weak with sufferings!' In friendship!—we appealed to the friendship of Macnaghten's murderers; to the friendship, in any case, of the man whose father we had dethroned and driven into exile. Not overpowering the weak with sufferings! The weak were the English! One might fancy he was reading the plaintive and piteous appeal of some forlorn and feeble tribe of helpless half-breeds for the mercy of arrogant and mastering rulers. Only the other day, it would seem, these men had received in surrender the bright sword of Dost Mahomed. Now they could only plead for a little gentleness of consideration, and had no thought of resistance, and did not any longer seem to know how to die.

We accepted the terms of treaty offered to us. The English were at once to take themselves off out of Afghanistan, giving up all their guns except six, which they were allowed to retain for their necessary defence in their mournful journey home; they were to leave behind all the treasure, and to guarantee the payment of something additional for the safe conduct of the poor little army to Peshawur or to Jellalabad; and they were to hand over six officers as hostages for the due fulfilment of the conditions. The conditions included the immediate release of Dost Mahomed and his family and their return to Afghanistan. When the treaty was signed, the officers who had been seized when Macnaghten was murdered were released.

The withdrawal from Cabul began. It was the heart of a cruel winter. The English had to make their way through the awful Pass of Koord Cabul. This stupendous gorge runs for some five miles between mountain ranges so narrow, lofty and grim, that in the winter season the rays of the sun can hardly pierce its darkness even at the noontide. Down the centre dashed a precipitous mountain torrent so fiercely that the stern frost of that terrible time could not stay its course. The snow lay in masses on the ground; the rocks and stones that raised their heads above the snow in the way of the unfortunate travellers were slippery with frost. Soon the white snow began to be stained and splashed with blood. Fearful as this Koord Cabul Pass was, it was only a degree worse than the road which for two whole days the English had to traverse to reach it. The army which set out from

Cabul numbered more than four thousand fighting men, of whom Europeans, it should be said, formed but a small proportion; and some twelve thousand camp followers of all kinds. There were also many women and children. Lady Macnaghten, widow of the murdered envoy; Lady Sale, whose gallant husband was holding Jellalabad at the near end of the Khyber Pass towards the Indian frontier; Mrs. Sturt, her daughter, soon to be widowed by the death of her young husband; Mrs. Trevor and her seven children, and many other pitiable fugitives. The winter journey would have been cruel and dangerous enough in time of peace; but this journey had to be accomplished in the midst of something far worse than common war. At every step of the road, every opening of the rocks, the unhappy crowd of confused and heterogeneous fugitives were beset by bands of savage fanatics, who with their long guns and long knives were murdering all they could reach. The English soldiers, weary, weak and crippled by frost, could make but a poor fight against the savage Afghans. Men, women and children, horses, ponies, camels, the wounded, the dying, the dead, all crowded together in almost inextricable confusion among the snow and amid the relentless enemies.

Akbar Khan constantly appeared on the scene during this journey of terror. At every opening or break of the long straggling flight he and his little band of followers showed themselves on the horizon, trying still to protect the English from utter ruin, as he declared; come to gloat over their misery and to see that it was surely accomplished, some of the unhappy English were ready to believe. Yet his presence was something that seemed to give a hope of protection. Akbar Khan at length startled the English by a proposal that the women and children who were with the army should be handed over to his custody to be conveyed by him in safety to Peshawur. There was nothing better to be done. The women and children and the married men whose wives were among this party were taken from the unfortunate army and placed under the care of Akbar Khan, and Lady Macnaghten had to undergo the agony of a personal interview with the man whose own hand had killed her husband. Akbar Khan was kindly in his language, and declared to the unhappy widow that he would give his right arm to undo, if it were possible, the deed that he had done.

The march was resumed; new horrors set in; new heaps

of corpses stained the snow; and then Akbar Khan presented himself with a fresh proposition. He demanded that General Elphinstone, the commander, with his second in command, and also one other officer, should hand themselves over to him as hostages. He promised if this were done to exert himself more than before to restrain the fanatical tribes, and also to provide the army in the Koord Cabul Pass with provisions. There was nothing for it but to submit; and the English general himself became, with the women and children, a captive in the hands of the inexorable enemy.

Then the march of the army, without a general, went on again. Soon it became the story of a general without an army; before very long there was neither general nor army. It is idle to lengthen a tale of mere horrors. The straggling remnant of an army entered the Jugdulluk Pass—a dark, steep, narrow, ascending path between crags. The miserable toilers found that the fanatical, implacable tribes had barricaded the pass. All was over. The army of Cabul was finally extinguished in that barricaded pass. It was a trap; the British were taken in it. A few mere fugitives escaped from the scene of actual slaughter, and were on the road to Jellalabad, where Sale and his little army were holding their own. When they were within sixteen miles of Jellalabad the number was reduced to six. Of these six, five were killed by straggling marauders on the way. One man alone reached Jellalabad to tell the tale. Literally one man, Dr. Brydon, came to Jellalabad out of a moving host which had numbered in all some sixteen thousand when it set out on its march. The curious eye will search through history or fiction in vain for any picture more thrilling with the suggestions of an awful catastrophe than that of this solitary survivor, faint and reeling on his jaded horse, as he appeared under the walls of Jellalabad, to bear the tidings of our Thermopylæ of pain and shame.

This is the crisis of the story. The rest is all recovery. The garrison at Jellalabad had received before Dr. Brydon's arrival an intimation that they were to go out and march towards India in accordance with the terms of the treaty extorted from Elphinstone at Cabul. They very properly declined to be bound by a treaty which, as General Sale rightly conjectured, had been 'forced from our envoy and military commander with the knives at their throats.' General Sale's determination was clear and simple. 'I propose to hold this place on the part of Government until I receive its order to the contrary.' This resolve of Sale's

was really the turning point of the history. Akbar Khan besieged Jellalabad. The garrison held out fearlessly; they resisted every attempt of Akbar Khan to advance upon their works, and at length, when it became certain that General Pollock was forcing the Khyber Pass to come to their relief, they issued boldly out of their forts, forced a battle on the Afghan chief, and completely defeated him. Before Pollock, having gallantly fought his way through the Khyber Pass, had reached Jellalabad, the beleaguering army had been entirely defeated and dispersed. General Nott at Candahar was ready now to co-operate with General Sale and General Pollock for any movement on Cabul which the authorities might advise or sanction. Meanwhile the unfortunate Shah Soojah, whom we had restored with so much pomp of announcement to the throne of his ancestors, was dead. He was assassinated in Cabul, soon after the departure of the British, by the orders of some of the chiefs who detested him; and his body, stripped of its royal robes and its many jewels, was flung into a ditch. All Shah Soojah owed to us was a few weeks of idle pomp and absurd dreams, a bitter awakening and a shameful death.

During this time a new Governor-General had arrived in India. Lord Auckland's time had run out, and during its latter months he had become nerveless and despondent because of the utter failure of the policy which in an evil hour for himself and his country he had been induced to undertake. He was an honourable, kindly gentleman, and the news of all the successive calamities fell upon him with a crushing, an overwhelming weight. He seemed to have no other idea than that of getting all our troops as quickly as might be out of Afghanistan, and shaking the dust of the place off our feet for ever. He was, in fact, a broken man.

His successor was Lord Ellenborough. He was well acquainted with the affairs of India. He had come into office under Sir Robert Peel on the resignation of the Melbourne Ministry. He was looked upon as a man of great ability and energy. It was known that his personal predilections were for the career of a soldier. He was fond of telling his hearers then and since that the life of a camp was that which he should have loved to lead. He was a man of great and, in certain lights, apparently splendid abilities. There was a certain Orientalism about his language, his aspirations and his policy. He loved gorgeousness and dramatic—ill-natured persons said theatric—effects. Life arranged itself in his

eyes as a superb and showy pageant of which it would have been his ambition to form the central figure. His eloquence was often of a lofty and noble order. But if Lord Ellenborough was in some respects a man of genius, he was also a man whose love of mere effects often made him seem like a quack. He was a man of great abilities and earnestness, who had in him a strong dash of the play-actor, who at the most serious moment of emergency always thought of how to display himself effectively, and would have met the peril of an empire with an overmastering desire to show to the best personal advantage.

Lord Ellenborough's appointment was hailed by all parties in India as the most auspicious that could be made. But those who thought in this way found themselves suddenly disappointed. Lord Ellenborough uttered and wrote a few showy sentences about revenging our losses and 're-establishing in all its original brilliancy our military character,' and then at once he announced that the only object of the Government was to get the troops out of Afghanistan as quickly as might be, and almost on any terms. A general outcry was raised in India and among the troops in Afghanistan against the extraordinary policy which Lord Ellenborough propounded. Englishmen, in fact, refused to believe in it; took it as something that must be put aside. The Governor-General himself after a while quietly put it aside. He allowed the military commanders in Afghanistan to pull their resources together and prepare for inflicting signal chastisement on the enemy. They were not long in doing this. They encountered the enemy wherever he showed himself and defeated him. They recaptured town after town, until at length, on September 15, 1842, General Pollock's force entered Cabul. A few days after, as a lasting mark of retribution for the crimes which had been committed there, the British commander ordered the destruction of the great bazaar of Cabul, where the mangled remains of the unfortunate envoy Macnaghten had been exhibited in brutal triumph and joy to the Afghan populace.

The captives, or hostages, who were hurried away that terrible January night at the command of Akbar Khan had yet to be recovered. There was a British general who was disposed to leave them to their fate and take no trouble about them, and who declared himself under the conviction, from the tenor of all Lord Ellenborough's despatches, that the recovery of the prisoners was 'a matter of indifference to the

Government.' Better counsels however prevailed. General Pollock insisted on an effort being made to recover the prisoners before the troops began to return to India, and he appointed to this noble duty the husband of one of the hostage ladies—Sir Robert Sale. The prisoners were recovered with greater ease than was expected—so many of them as were yet alive. Poor General Elphinstone had long before succumbed to disease and hardship. The ladies had gone through strange privations. They suffered almost every fierce alternation of cold and heat. They had to live on the coarsest fare; they were lodged in a manner which would have made the most wretched prison accommodation of a civilised country seem luxurious by comparison; they were in constant uncertainty and fear, not knowing what might befall. Yet they seem to have held up their courage and spirits wonderfully well, and to have kept the hearts of the children alive with mirth and sport at moments of the utmost peril. They were carried off to the wild rugged regions of the Indian Caucasus, under the charge of one of Akbar Khan's soldiers of fortune. This man had begun to suspect that things were well-nigh hopeless with Akbar Khan. He was induced to enter into an agreement with the prisoners securing him a large reward, and a pension for life, if he enabled them to escape. He accordingly declared that he renounced his allegiance to Akbar Khan; all the more readily, seeing that news came in of the chief's total defeat and flight, no one knew whither. The prisoners and their escort, lately their gaoler and guards, set forth on their way to General Pollock's camp. On their way they met the English parties sent out to seek for them.

There is a very different ending to the episode of the English captives in Bokhara. Colonel Stoddart, who had been sent to the Persian camp in the beginning of all these events to insist that Persia must desist from the siege of Herat, was sent subsequently on a mission to the Ameer of Bokhara. The Ameer threw Stoddart into prison. Captain Conolly undertook to endeavour to effect the liberation of Stoddart, but could only succeed in sharing his sufferings, and at last his fate. Nothing was done to obtain their release beyond diplomatic efforts, and appeals to the magnanimity of the Ameer which had not any particular effect. Dr. Wolff, the celebrated traveller and missionary, afterwards undertook an expedition of his own in the hope of saving the unfortunate captives; but he only reached Bokhara in time to hear that they had been put to death.

The moment and actual manner of their death cannot be known to positive certainty, but there is little doubt they were executed on the same day by the orders of the Ameer.

On October 1, 1842, exactly four years since Lord Auckland's proclamation announcing and justifying the intervention to restore Shah Soojah, Lord Ellenborough issued another proclamation announcing the complete failure and the revocation of the policy of his predecessor. Lord Ellenborough declared that 'to force a sovereign upon a reluctant people would be as inconsistent with the policy as it is with the principles of the British Government;' that therefore they would recognise any Government approved by the Afghans themselves; that the British arms would be withdrawn from Afghanistan, and that the Government of India would remain 'content with the limit nature appears to have assigned to its empire.' Dost Mahomed was released from his captivity, and before long was ruler of Cabul once again. Thus ended the story of our expedition to reorganise the internal condition of Afghanistan.

CHAPTER V.

PEEL'S ADMINISTRATION.

'THE year 1843,' said O'Connell, 'is and shall be the great Repeal year.' In the year 1843, at all events, O'Connell was by far the most prominent politician in these countries who had never been in office. O'Connell was a thorough Celt. He represented all the impulsiveness, the quick-changing emotions, the passionate, exaggerated loves and hatreds, the heedlessness of statement, the tendency to confound impressions with facts, the ebullient humour—all the other qualities that are especially characteristic of the Celt. As the orator of a popular assembly, as the orator of a monster meeting, he probably never had an equal in these countries. He had many of the physical endowments that are especially favourable to success in such a sphere. He had a herculean frame, a stately presence, a face capable of expressing easily and effectively the most rapid alternations of mood, and a voice which all hearers admit to have been almost unrivalled for strength and sweetness. Its power, its pathos, its passion, its music have been described in words of positive rapture by

men who detested O'Connell, and who would rather if they could have denied to him any claim on public attention, even in the matter of voice. He spoke without studied preparation, and of course had all the defects of such a style. He fell into repetition and into carelessness of construction; he was hurried away into exaggeration and sometimes into mere bombast. But he had all the peculiar success, too, which rewards the orator who can speak without preparation. He always spoke right to the hearts of his hearers. He entered the House of Commons when he was nearly fifty-four years of age. Most persons supposed that the style of speaking he had formed, first in addressing juries, and next in rousing Irish mobs, must cause his failure when he came to appeal to the unsympathetic and fastidious House of Commons. But it is certain that O'Connell became one of the most successful Parliamentary orators of his time.

He had borne the leading part in carrying Catholic Emancipation. It must in a short time have been carried if O'Connell had never lived. But it was carried just then by virtue of O'Connell's bold agitation. O'Connell and the Irish people saw that Catholic Emancipation had been yielded to pressure rather than to justice; it is not wonderful if they thought that pressure might prevail as well in the matter of Repeal. Nor is there any reason to doubt that O'Connell himself believed in the possibility of accomplishing his purpose. We are apt now to think of the Union between England and Ireland as of time-honoured endurance. It had been scarcely thirty years in existence when O'Connell entered Parliament. To O'Connell it appeared simply as a modern innovation which had nothing to be said for it except that a majority of Englishmen had by threats and bribery forced it on a majority of Irishmen. He perceived the possibility of forming a powerful party in Parliament, which would be free to co-operate with all English parties without coalescing with any, and might thus turn the balance of factions and decide the fate of Ministries. He believed that under a constitutional Government the will of four-fifths of a nation, if peacefully, perseveringly and energetically expressed, must sooner or later be triumphant.

In many respects O'Connell differed from more modern Irish Nationalists. He was a thorough Liberal. He was a devoted opponent of negro slavery; he was a staunch Free Trader; he was a friend of popular education; he was an

enemy to all excess; he was opposed to strikes; he was an advocate of religious equality everywhere. He preached the doctrine of constitutional agitation strictly, and declared that no political Reform was worth the shedding of one drop of blood. It may be asked how it came about that with all these excellent attributes, which all critics now allow to him, O'Connell was so detested by the vast majority of the English people. One reason undoubtedly is that O'Connell deliberately revived and worked up for his political purposes the almost extinct national hatreds of Celt and Saxon. As a phrase of political controversy, he may be said to have invented the word 'Saxon.' In the common opinion of Englishmen, all the evils of Ireland, all the troubles attaching to the connection between the two countries, had arisen from this unmitigated, rankling hatred of Celt for Saxon. Yet O'Connell was in no sense a revolutionist. Of the Irish rebels of '98 he spoke with as savage an intolerance as the narrowest English Tories could show in speaking of himself. The Tones, and Emmets, and Fitzgeralds, whom so many of the Irish people adored, were in O'Connell's eyes, and in his words, only 'a gang of miscreants.' His theory and his policy were that Ireland was to be saved by a dictatorship entrusted to himself.

He had a Parliamentary system by means of which he proposed to approach more directly the question of Repeal of the Union. He got seats in the House of Commons for a number of his sons, his nephews, and his sworn retainers. He had an almost supreme control over the Irish constituencies, and whenever a vacancy took place he sent down a Repeal candidate to contest it. He always inculcated and insisted on the necessity of order and peace. Indeed, as he proposed to carry on his agitation altogether by the help of the bishops and the priests, it was not possible for him, even were he so inclined, to conduct it on any other than peaceful principles. 'The man who commits a crime gives strength to the enemy,' was a maxim which he was never weary of impressing upon his followers. The Temperance movement set on foot with such remarkable and sudden success by Father Mathew was at once turned to account by O'Connell. He called upon his followers to join it, and was always boasting of his 'noble army of Teetotalers.' He started that system of agitation by monster meeting which has since his time been regularly established among us as a principal

part of all political organisation for a definite purpose. He founded in Dublin a Repeal Association which met on Burgh Quay, in a place which he styled Conciliation Hall. The famous monster meetings were usually held on a Sunday, on some open spot, mostly selected for its historic fame, and with all the picturesque surroundings of hill and stream. From the dawn of the summer day the Repealers were thronging to the scene of the meeting. They came from all parts of the neighbouring country for miles and miles. They were commonly marshalled and guided by their parish priests. They all attended the services of their Church before the meeting began.

O'Connell himself, it is needless to say, was always the great orator of the day. His magnificent voice enabled him to do what no genius and no eloquence less aptly endowed could have done. He could send his lightest word thrilling to the extreme of the vast concourse of people whom he desired to move. He swayed them with the magic of an absolute control. He understood all the moods of his people; to address himself to them came naturally to him. He made them roar with laughter; he made them weep; he made them thrill with indignation. As the shadow runs over a field, so the impression of his varying eloquence ran over the assemblage. He commanded the emotions of his hearers as a consummate conductor sways the energies of his orchestra.

The crowds who attended the monster meetings came in a sort of military order and with a certain parade of military discipline. At the meeting held on the Hill of Tara, where O'Connell stood beside the stone said to have been used for the coronation of the ancient monarchs of Ireland, it is declared on the authority of careful and unsympathetic witnesses that a quarter of a million of people must have been present. The Government naturally felt that there was a very considerable danger in the massing together of such vast crowds of men in something like military array and under the absolute leadership of one man, who openly avowed that he had called them together to show England what was the strength her statesmen would have to fear if they continued to deny Repeal to his demand. The Government at last resolved to interfere. A meeting was announced to be held at Clontarf on Sunday, October 8, 1843. Clontarf is near Dublin, and is famous in Irish history as the scene of a great victory of the Irish over their Danish invaders. It was intended that this

meeting should surpass in numbers and in earnestness the assemblage at Tara. On the very day before the 8th the Lord-Lieutenant issued a proclamation prohibiting the meeting as 'calculated to excite reasonable and well-grounded apprehension' in that its object was 'to accomplish alterations in the laws and constitution of the realm by intimidation and the demonstration of physical force.' O'Connell's power over the people was never shown more effectively than in the control which at that critical moment he was still able to exercise. O'Connell declared that the orders of the Lord-Lieutenant must be obeyed; that the meeting must not take place; and that the people must return to their homes. The 'uncrowned king,' as some of his admirers loved to call him, was obeyed, and no meeting was held.

From that moment, however, the great power of the Repeal agitation was gone. It was now made clear that he did not intend to have resort to force. The young and fiery followers of the great agitator renounced all faith in him. All the imposing demonstrations of physical strength lost their value when it was made positively known that they were only demonstrations, and that nothing was ever to come of them.

The Government at once proceeded to the prosecution of O'Connell and some of his principal associates. They were charged with conspiring to raise and excite disaffection among her Majesty's subjects, to excite them to hatred and contempt of the Government and Constitution of the realm. The jury found O'Connell guilty along with most of his associates, and he was sentenced to twelve months' imprisonment and a fine of 2,000*l*. The others received lighter sentences. O'Connell appealed to the House of Lords against the sentence. In the meantime he issued a proclamation to the Irish people commanding them to keep perfectly quiet and not to commit any offence against the law. 'Every man,' said one of his proclamations, 'who is guilty of the slightest breach of the peace is an enemy of me and of Ireland.' The Irish people took him at his word and remained perfectly quiet.

O'Connell and his principal associates were committed to Richmond Prison, in Dublin. The trial had been delayed in various ways, and the sentence was not pronounced until May 24, 1844. The appeal to the House of Lords was heard in the following September, the judgment was reversed, and O'Connell and his associates were set at liberty. There was all manner of national rejoicing when the decision of the House

of Lords set O'Connell and his fellow-prisoners free. There were illuminations and banquets and meetings and triumphal processions, renewed declarations of allegiance to the great leader, and renewed protestations on his part that Repeal was coming. But his reign was over. His health broke down more and more every day. He became seized with a profound melancholy. Only one desire seemed left to him, the desire to close his stormy career in Rome. He longed to lie down in the shadow of the dome of St. Peter's and rest there, and there die. His youth had been wild in more ways than one, and he had long been under the influence of a profound penitence. He had killed a man in a duel, and was through all his after life haunted by regret for the deed, although it was really forced on him, and he had acted only as any other man of his time would have acted in such conditions. But now in his old and sinking days all the errors of his youth and his strong manhood came back upon him, and he longed to steep the painful memories in the sacred influences of Rome. He hurried to Italy. He reached Genoa. His strength wholly failed him there, and he died, still far from Rome, on May 15, 1847.

Some important steps in the progress of what may be described as social legislation are part of the history of Peel's Government. The Act of Parliament which prohibited absolutely the employment of women and girls in mines and collieries was rendered unavoidable by the fearful exposures made through the instrumentality of a Commission appointed to inquire into the whole subject. This Commission was appointed on the motion of the then Lord Ashley, since better known as the Earl of Shaftesbury, a man who during the whole of a long career has always devoted himself to the task of brightening the lives and lightening the burthens of the working classes and the poor. In some of the coal mines women were literally employed as beasts of burden. Lord Ashley had the happiness and the honour of putting a stop to this infamous sort of labour for ever by the Act of 1842, which declared that, after a certain limited period, no woman or girl whatever should be employed in mines and collieries.

Lord Ashley was less completely successful in his endeavour to secure a ten hours' limitation for the daily labour of women and young persons in factories. By a vigorous annual agitation on the general subject of factory labour, he brought the Government up to the point of undertaking legislation on

the subject. They first introduced a bill which combined a limitation of the labour of children in factories with a plan for compulsory education among the children. Afterwards the Government brought in another bill, which became in the end the Factories Act of 1844. It was during the passing of this measure that Lord Ashley tried unsuccessfully to introduce his ten hours' limit. The bill diminished the working hours of children under thirteen years of age, and fixed them at six and a half hours each day; extended somewhat the time during which they were to be under daily instruction, and did a good many other useful and wholesome things. The principle of legislative interference to protect youthful workers in factories had been already established by the Act of 1833; and Lord Ashley's agitation only obtained for it a somewhat extended application. It has since that time again and again received further extension.

Many other things done by Sir Robert Peel's Government aroused bitter controversy and agitation. There was, for example, the grant to the Roman Catholic College of Maynooth, a college for the education specially of young men who sought to enter the ranks of the priesthood. The grant was not a new thing. Since before the Act of Union a grant had been made for the college. The Government of Sir Robert Peel only proposed to make that which was insufficient sufficient; to enable the college to be kept in repair and to accomplish the purpose for which it was founded. Yet the Ministerial proposition called up a very tempest of clamorous bigotry all over the country. Peel carried his measure, although nearly half his own party in the House of Commons voted against it on the second reading.

There was objection within the Ministry, as well as without, to the Maynooth grant. Mr. Gladstone, who had been doing admirable work, first as Vice-President, and afterwards as President, of the Board of Trade, resigned his office because of this proposal. He acted, perhaps, with a too sensitive chivalry. He had written a work on the relations of Church and State, and he did not think the views expressed in that book left him free to co-operate in the Ministerial measure. Some staid politicians were shocked, many smiled, not a few sneered. The public in general applauded the spirit of disinterestedness which dictated the young statesman's act.

Mr. Gladstone, however, supported by voice and vote the Queen's Colleges scheme, another of Peel's measures which

aroused much clamour. The proposal of the Government was to establish in Ireland three colleges, one in Cork, the second in Belfast, and the third in Galway, and to affiliate these to a new university to be called the 'Queen's University in Ireland.' The teaching in these colleges was to be purely secular. Nothing could be more admirable than the intentions of Peel and his colleagues. Peel carried his measure; but from both sides of the House and from the extreme party in each Church came an equally vigorous denunciation of the proposal to separate secular from religious education.

One small instalment of justice to a much injured and long suffering religious body was accomplished without any trouble by Sir Robert Peel's Government. This was the bill for removing the test by which Jews were excluded from certain municipal offices. A Jew might be high sheriff of a county, or Sheriff of London, but, with an inconsistency which was as ridiculous as it was narrow-minded, he was prevented from becoming a mayor, an alderman, or even a member of the Common Council. The oath which had to be taken included the words, 'on the true faith of a Christian.' Lord Lyndhurst, the Lord Chancellor, introduced a measure to get rid of this absurd anomaly; and the House of Lords, which had firmly rejected similar proposals of relief before, passed it without any difficulty. It was of course passed by the House of Commons, which had done its best to introduce the reform in previous sessions, and without success.

The Bank Charter Act, separating the issue from the banking department of the Bank of England, limiting the issue of notes to a fixed amount of securities, requiring the whole of the further circulation to be on a basis of bullion, and prohibiting the formation of any new banks of issue, is a characteristic and an important measure of Peel's Government. To Peel, too, we owe the establishment of the income tax on its present basis—a doubtful boon. The copyright question was at least advanced a stage. Railways were regulated. The railway mania and railway panic also belong to this active period. The country went wild with railway speculation. The vulgar and flashy successes of one or two lucky adventurers turned the heads of the whole community. For a time it seemed to be a national article of faith that the capacity of the country to absorb new railway schemes and make them profitable was unlimited, and that to make a fortune one had only to take shares in anything.

An odd feature of the time was the outbreak of what were called the Rebecca riots in Wales. These riots arose out of the anger and impatience of the people at the great increase of toll-bars and tolls on the public roads. Some one, it was supposed, had hit upon a passage in Genesis which supplied a motto for their grievance and their complaint. 'And they blessed Rebekah, and said unto her . . . let thy seed possess the gate of those which hate them.' They set about accordingly to possess very effectually the gates of those which hated them. Mobs, led by men in women's clothes, assembled every night, destroyed turnpikes, and dispersed. Blood was shed in conflicts with police and soldiers. At last the Government succeeded in putting down the riots, and had the wisdom to appoint a Commission to inquire into the cause of so much disturbance; and the Commission, as will readily be imagined, found that there were genuine grievances at the bottom of the popular excitement. The farmers and the labourers were poor; the tolls were seriously oppressive. The Government dealt lightly with most of the rioters who had been captured, and introduced measures which removed the most serious grievances.

Sir James Graham, the Home Secretary, brought himself and the Government into some trouble by authorising the Post Office to open some of the letters of Joseph Mazzini, the Italian exile. The public excitement was at first very great; but it soon subsided. The reports of Parliamentary committees appointed by the two Houses showed that all Governments had exercised the right, but naturally with decreasing frequency and greater caution of late years; and that there was no chance now of its being seriously abused. One remark it is right to make. An exile is sheltered in a country like England on the assumption that he does not involve her in responsibility and danger by using her protection as a shield behind which to contrive plots and organise insurrections against foreign Governments. It is certain that Mazzini did make use of the shelter England gave him for such a purpose. It would in the end be to the heavy injury of all fugitives from despotic rule if to shelter them brought such consequences on the countries that offered them a home.

The Peel Administration had wars of its own. Scinde was annexed by Lord Ellenborough in consequence of the disputes which had arisen between us and the Ameers, whom we accused of having broken faith with us. Peel and his colleagues accepted the annexation. None of them liked it; but none saw

how it could be undone. Later on the Sikhs invaded our territory by crossing the Sutlej in great force. Sir Hugh Gough, afterwards Lord Gough, fought several fierce battles with them before he could conquer them; and even then they were only conquered for the time.

We were at one moment apparently on the very verge of what must have proved a far more serious war much nearer home, in consequence of the dispute that arose between this country and France about Tahiti and Queen Pomare. Queen Pomare was sovereign of the island of Tahiti, in the South Pacific, the Otaheite of Captain Cook. She had been induced or compelled to put herself and her dominion under the protection of France; a step which was highly displeasing to her subjects. Some ill-feeling towards the French residents of the island was shown; and the French admiral, who had induced or compelled the queen to put herself under French protection, now suddenly appeared off the coast, and called on her to hoist the French flag above her own. She refused; and he instantly effected a landing on the island, pulled down her flag, raised that of France in its place, and proclaimed that the island was French territory. His act was at once disavowed by the French Government. But Queen Pomare had appealed to the Queen of England for assistance. While the more hot-headed on both sides of the English Channel were snarling at each other, the difficulty was immensely complicated by the French commandant's seizure of a missionary named Pritchard, who had been our consul in the island up to the deposition of Pomare. Pritchard was flung into prison, and only released to be expelled from the island. He came home to England with his story; and his arrival was the signal for an outburst of indignation all over the country. In the end the French Government agreed to compensate Pritchard for his sufferings and losses. Queen Pomare was nominally restored to power, but the French protection proved as stringent as if it were a sovereign rule. She might as well have pulled down her flag for all the sovereign right it secured to her. She died thirty-four years after, and her death recalled to the memory of the English public the long-forgotten fact she had once so nearly been the cause of a war between England and France.

The Ashburton Treaty and the Oregon Treaty belong alike to the history of Peel's Administration. The Ashburton Treaty bears date August 9, 1842, and arranges finally the north-western boundary between the British Provinces of North America

and the United States. More than once the dispute about the boundary line in the Oregon region had very nearly become an occasion for war between England and the United States. On June 15, 1846, the Oregon Treaty settled the question for that time at least. Vancouver's Island remained to Great Britian, and the free navigation of the Columbia River was secured. The question came up again for discussion in 1871, and was finally settled by the arbitration of the Emperor of Germany.

During Peel's time we catch a last glimpse of the famous Arctic navigator, Sir John Franklin. He sailed on the expedition which was doomed to be his last, on May 26, 1845, with his two vessels, *Erebus* and *Terror*. Not much more is heard of him as among the living.

CHAPTER VI.

THE ANTI-CORN LAW LEAGUE.

THE famous Corn Law of 1815 was a copy of the Corn Law of 1670. The former measure imposed a duty on the importation of foreign grain which amounted to prohibition. Wheat might be exported upon the payment of one shilling per quarter Customs duty; but importation was practically prohibited until the price of wheat had reached eighty shillings a quarter. The Corn Law of 1815 was hurried through Parliament, absolutely closing the ports against the importation of foreign grain until the price of our home-grown grain had reached the magic figure of eighty shillings a quarter. It was hurried through, despite the most earnest petitions from the commercial and manufacturing classes. A great deal of popular disturbance attended the passing of the measure. There were riots in London, and in many parts of the country. After the Corn Law of 1815, thus ominously introduced, there were Sliding Scale Acts, having for their business to establish a varying system of duty, so that, according as the price of home-produced wheat rose to a certain height, the duty on imported wheat sank in proportion. The principle of all these measures was the same. It was founded on the assumption that the corn grew for the benefit of the grower first of all; and that until he had been secured in a handsome profit the public at large had no right to any

reduction in the cost of food. When the harvest was a good one, and the golden grain was plenty, then the soul of the grower was afraid, and he called out to Parliament to protect him against the calamity of having to sell his corn any cheaper than in years of famine. He did not see all the time that if the prosperity of the country in general was enhanced, he too must come to benefit by it.

A movement against the Corn Laws began in London. An Anti-Corn Law Association on a small scale was formed. Its list of members bore the names of more than twenty members of Parliament, and for a time the society had a look of vigour about it. It came to nothing, however. London has never been found an effective nursery of agitation. It has hardly ever made or represented thoroughly the public opinion of England during any great crisis. A new centre of operations had to be sought, and in the year 1838 a meeting was held in Manchester to consider measures necessary to be adopted for bringing about the complete repeal of the obnoxious Laws. The Manchester Chamber of Commerce adopted a petition to Parliament against the Corn Laws. The Anti-Corn Law agitation had been fairly launched. From that time it grew and grew in importance and strength. Meetings were held in various towns of England and Scotland. Associations were formed everywhere to co-operate with the movement which had its head-quarters in Manchester.

The nominal leader of the Free Trade party in Parliament was for many years Mr. Charles Villiers, a man of aristocratic family and surroundings, of remarkable ability, and of the steadiest fidelity to the cause he had undertaken. Mr. Villiers brought forward for several successive sessions in the House of Commons a motion in favour of the total repeal of the Corn Laws. His eloquence and argumentative power served the great purpose of drawing the attention of the country to the whole question, and making converts to the principle he advocated. But Mr. Villiers might have gone on for all his life dividing the House of Commons on the question of Free Trade, without getting much nearer his object, if it were not for the manner in which the cause was taken up by the country, and more particularly by the great manufacturing towns of the North. Until the passing of Lord Grey's Reform Bill these towns had no representation in Parliament. They seemed destined after that event to make up for their long exclusion from representative influence by taking the

government of the country into their own hands. Manchester, Birmingham, and Leeds are no whit less important to the life of the nation now than they were before Free Trade. But their supremacy does not exist now as it did then. At that time it was town against country; Manchester representing the town, and the whole Conservative (at one period almost the whole landowning) body representing the country. With the Manchester school, as it was called, began a new kind of popular agitation. Up to that time agitation meant appeal to passion, and lived by provoking passion. The Manchester school introduced the agitation which appealed to reason and argument only; which stirred men's hearts with figures of arithmetic rather than figures of speech, and which converted mob meetings to political economy.

The real leader of the movement was Mr. Richard Cobden. Mr. Cobden was a man belonging to the yeoman class. He had received but a moderate education. His father dying while the great Free Trader was still young, Richard Cobden was taken in charge by an uncle, who had a wholesale warehouse in the City of London, and who gave him employment there. Cobden afterwards became a partner in a Manchester printed cotton factory; and he travelled occasionally on the commercial business of this establishment. He had a great liking for travel; but not by any means as the ordinary tourist travels; the interest of Cobden was not in scenery, or in art, or in ruins, but in men. He studied the condition of countries with a view to the manner in which it affected the men and women of the present, and through them was likely to affect the future. On everything that he saw he turned a quick and intelligent eye; and he saw for himself and thought for himself. Wherever he went, he wanted to learn something. He had in abundance that peculiar faculty which some great men of widely different stamp from him and from each other have possessed, the faculty which exacts from everyone with whom the owner comes into contact some contribution to his stock of information and to his advantage. Cobden could learn something from everybody. He travelled very widely, for a time when travelling was more difficult work than it is at present. He made himself familiar with most of the countries of Europe, with many parts of the East, and what was then a rarer accomplishment. with the United States and Canada. He studied these countries and visited many of them again to compare early with later impressions. When he was

about thirty years of age he began to acquire a certain reputation as the author of pamphlets directed against some of the pet doctrines of old-fashioned statesmanship; the balance of power in Europe; the necessity of maintaining a State Church in Ireland; the importance of allowing no European quarrel to go on without England's intervention; and similar dogmas. The tongue, however, was his best weapon. If oratory were a business and not an art—that is, if its test were its success rather than its form—then it might be contended reasonably enough that Mr. Cobden was one of the greatest orators England has ever known. Nothing could exceed the persuasiveness of his style. His manner was simple, sweet and earnest. It was transparently sincere. The light of its convictions shone all through it. It aimed at the reason and the judgment of the listener, and seemed to be convincing him to his own interest against his prejudices. Cobden's style was almost exclusively conversational, but he had a clear, well-toned voice, with a quiet, unassuming power in it which enabled him to make his words heard distinctly and without effort all through the great meetings he had often to address. His speeches were full of variety. He illustrated every argument by something drawn from his personal observation or from reading, and his illustrations were always striking, appropriate and interesting. He had a large amount of bright and winning humour, and he spoke the simplest and purest English. He never used an unnecessary sentence or failed for a single moment to make his meaning clear. Many strong opponents of Mr. Cobden's opinions confessed even during his lifetime that they sometimes found with dismay their most cherished convictions crumbling away beneath his flow of easy argument. In the stormy times of national passion Mr. Cobden was less powerful. The apostle of common sense and fair dealing, he had no sympathy with the passions of men; he did not understand them; they passed for nothing in his calculations. His judgment of men and of nations was based far too much on his knowledge of his own motives and character. He knew that in any given case he could always trust himself to act the part of a just and prudent man; and he assumed that all the world could be governed by the rules of prudence and of equity. He cared little or nothing for mere sentiments. Even where these had their root in some human tendency that was noble in itself, he did not reverence them if they seemed to stand in the way of men's acting peacefully

and prudently. Thus he never represented more than half the English character. He was always out of sympathy with his countrymen on some great political question. But he seemed as if he were designed by nature to conduct to such success an agitation as that against the Corn Laws.

Mr. Cobden found some colleagues who were worthy of him. His chief companion in the campaign was Mr. Bright. It is doubtful whether English public life has ever produced a man who possessed more of the qualifications of a great orator than Mr. Bright. He had a commanding presence, a massive figure, a large head, a handsome and expressive face. His voice was powerful, resonant, clear, with a peculiar vibration in it which leant unspeakable effect to any passages of pathos or of scorn. His style of speaking was pure to austerity; it was stripped of all superfluous ornament. It never gushed or foamed. It never allowed itself to be mastered by passion. The first peculiarity that struck the listener was its superb self-restraint. The orator at his most powerful passages appeared as if he were rather keeping in his strength than taxing it with effort. His voice was for the most part calm and measured; he hardly ever indulged in much gesticulation. He never, under the pressure of whatever emotion, shouted or stormed. The fire of his eloquence was a white heat, intense, consuming, but never sparkling or sputtering. He had an admirable gift of humour and a keen ironical power. He had read few books, but of those he read he was a master. The English Bible and Milton were his chief studies. Bright was a man of the middle class. His family were Quakers of a somewhat austere mould. They were manufacturers of carpets in Rochdale, Lancashire, and had made considerable money in their business.

There was something positively romantic about the mutual attachment of these two men, who worked together in the closest brotherhood, who loved each other as not all brothers do, who were associated so closely in the public mind that until Cobden's death the name of one was scarcely ever mentioned without that of the other. Each led a noble life; each was in his own way a man of genius; each was simple and strong. Rivalry between them would have been impossible, although they were every day being compared and contrasted by both friendly and unfriendly critics. Their gifts were admirably suited to make them powerful allies. Each had something that the other wanted. Bright had not Cobden's winning persuasiveness nor his surprising ease and

force of argument. But Cobden had not anything like his companion's oratorical power. He had not the tones of scorn, of pathos, of humour, and of passion. The two together made a genuine power in the House of Commons and on the platform.

These men had many assistants and lieutenants well worthy to act with them and under them, such as Mr. W. J. Fox, for instance, a Unitarian minister of great popularity and remarkable eloquence, and Mr. Milner Gibson, who had been a Tory.

The League, however, successful as it might be throughout the country, had its great work to do in Parliament. Even after the change made in favour of manufacturing and middle class interests by the Reform Bill, the House of Commons was still composed, as to nine-tenths of its whole number, by representatives of the landlords. The entire House of Lords then was constituted of the owners of land. All tradition, all prestige, all the dignity of aristocratic institutions, seemed to be naturally arrayed against the new movement, conducted as it was by manufacturers and traders for the benefit seemingly of trade and those whom it employed. The artisan population who might have been formidable as a disturbing element were on the whole rather against the Free Traders than for them. Nearly all the great official leaders had to be converted to the doctrines of Free Trade.

The Anti-Corn Law agitation introduced a game of politics into England which astonished and considerably discomfited steady-going politicians. The League men did not profess to be bound by any indefeasible bond of allegiance to the Whig party. They were prepared to co-operate with any party whatever which would undertake to abolish the Corn Laws.

It is a significant fact that the Anti-Corn Law League were not in the least discouraged by the accession of Sir Robert Peel to power. Their hopes seem rather to have gone up than gone down when the minister came into power whose adherents, unlike those of Lord John Russell, were absolutely against the very principle of Free Trade. It is certain that the League always regarded Sir Robert Peel as a Free Trader in heart; as one who fully admitted the principle of Free Trade, but who did not see his way just then to deprive the agricultural interest of the protection on which they had for so many years been allowed and encouraged to lean.

The country party did not understand Sir Robert

Peel as their opponents and his assuredly understood him. They did not at this time believe in the possibility of any change. Free Trade was to them little more than an abstraction. They did not much care who preached it out of Parliament. They were convinced that the state of things they saw around them when they were boys would continue to the end. Both parties in the House—that is to say, both of the parties from whom ministers were taken—alike set themselves against the introduction of any Free Trade measure.

It would have been better if Sir Robert Peel had devoted himself more directly to preparing the minds of his followers for the fact that protection for grain having ceased to be tenable as an economic principle would possibly some day have to be given up as a practice. He might have been able to show them, as the events have shown them since, that the introduction of free corn would be a blessing to the population of England in general, and would do nothing but good for the landed interest as well. The influence of Peel at that time, and indeed all through his administration up to the introduction of his Free Trade measures, was limitless, so far as his party were concerned. He could have done anything with them. But Peel, to begin with, was a reserved, cold, somewhat awkward man. He was not effusive; he did not pour out his emotions and reveal all his changes of opinion in bursts of confidence even to his habitual associates. He brooded over these things in his own mind; he gave such expression to them in open debate as any passing occasion seemed strictly to call for; and he assumed perhaps that the gradual changes operating in his views when thus expressed were understood by his followers. Above all, it is probable that Peel himself did not see until almost the last moment that the time had actually come when the principle of Protection must give way to other and more weighty claims.

We see how the two great parties of the State stood with regard to this question of Free Trade. The Whigs were steadily gravitating towards it. Their leaders did not quite see their way to accept it as a principle of practical statesmanship, but it was evident that their acceptance of it was only a question of time, and of no long time. The leader of the Tory party was being drawn day by day more in the same direction. Both leaders, Russell and Peel, had gone so far as to admit the general principle of Free Trade. Peel had contended that grain was in England a necessary exception;

Russell was not of opinion that the time had come when it could be treated otherwise than as an exception. The Free Trade party was daily growing more and more powerful with the country. This must soon have ended in one or other of the two great ruling parties forming an alliance with the Free Traders. But in the case of the Anti-Corn Law agitation, an event over which political parties had no control intervened to spur the intent of the Prime Minister. Mr. Bright many years after, when pronouncing the eulogy of his dead friend Cobden, described what happened in a fine sentence: 'Famine itself, against which we had warred, joined us.' In the autumn of 1845 the potato rot began in Ireland.

The vast majority of the working population of Ireland were known to depend absolutely on the potato for subsistence. In the northern province, where the population were of Scotch extraction, the oatmeal, the brose of their ancestors, still supplied the staple of their food; but in the southern and western provinces a large proportion of the peasantry actually lived on the potato and the potato alone. In these districts whole generations grew up, lived, married, and passed away, without having ever tasted flesh meat. It was evident then that a failure in the potato crop would be equivalent to a famine. The news came in the autumn of 1845 that the long continuance of sunless wet and cold had imperilled, if not already destroyed, the food of a people.

The Cabinet of Sir Robert Peel held hasty meetings closely following each other. People began to ask whether Parliament was about to be called together, and whether the Government had resolved on a bold policy. The Anti-Corn Law League were clamouring for the opening of the ports. The Prime Minister himself was strongly in favour of such a course. The Duke of Wellington and Lord Stanley, however, opposed the idea of the opening of the ports, and the proposal fell through. The Cabinet merely resolved on appointing a Commission, consisting of the heads of departments in Ireland, to take some steps to guard against a sudden outbreak of famine, and the thought of an autumnal session was abandoned.

The great cry all through Ireland was for the opening of the ports. The Mansion House Relief Committee of Dublin issued a series of resolutions declaring that the potato disease was daily expanding more and more, and the document concluded with a denunciation of the Ministry for not opening

the ports, or calling Parliament together before the usual time for its assembling.

Two or three days after the issue of these resolutions Lord John Russell wrote a letter from Edinburgh to his constituents, the electors of the City of London, announcing his unqualified conversion to the principles of the Anti-Corn Law League. The failure of the potato crop was of course the immediate occasion of this letter. As Peel himself said, the letter 'justified the conclusion that the Whig party was prepared to unite with the Anti-Corn Law League in demanding the total repeal of the Corn Laws.' Peel would not consent now to propose simply an opening of the ports. It would seem, he thought, a mere submission to accept the minimum of the terms ordered by the Whig leader. Sir Robert Peel therefore recommended to his Cabinet an early meeting of Parliament with the view of bringing forward some measure equivalent to a speedy Repeal of the Corn Laws.

The recommendation was wise. It was, indeed, indispensable. Yet neither Whigs nor Tories appear to have formed a judgment because of facts or principles, but only in deference to the political necessities of the hour. The potato rot inspired the writing of Lord John Russell's letter; and Lord John Russell's letter inspired Sir Robert Peel with the conviction that something must be done. Most of Peel's colleagues were inclined to go with him this time. A Cabinet Council was held on November 25, almost immediately after the publication of Lord John Russell's letter. At that council Sir Robert Peel recommended the summoning of Parliament with a view to instant measures to combat the famine in Ireland, but with a view also to some announcement of legislation intended to pave the way for the repeal of the Corn Laws. Lord Stanley and the Duke of Buccleuch intimated to the Prime Minister that they could not be parties to any measure involving the ultimate repeal of the Corn Laws. Sir Robert Peel did not believe that he could carry out his project satisfactorily under such circumstances, and he therefore hastened to tender his resignation to the Queen.

Lord John Russell was sent for from Edinburgh. His letter had without any such purpose on his part written him up as the man to take Sir Robert Peel's place. Lord John Russell came to London and did his best to cope with the many difficulties of the situation. His party were not very strong in the country, and they had not a majority in the House

of Commons. Lord John Russell showed, even then, his characteristic courage. He resolved to form a Ministry without a Parliamentary majority. He was not however fated to try the ordeal. Lord Grey, who was a few months before Lord Howick, and who had just succeeded to the title of his father (the stately Charles Earl Grey, the pupil of Fox, and chief of the Cabinet which passed the Reform Bill and abolished slavery)—Lord Grey felt a strong objection to the foreign policy of Lord Palmerston, and these two could not get on in one Ministry as it was part of Lord John Russell's plan that they should do.

Lord John Russell found it impossible to form a Ministry. He signified his failure to the Queen. Probably, having done the best he could, he was not particularly distressed to find that his efforts were ineffectual. The Queen had to send for Sir Robert Peel to Windsor and tell him that she must require him to withdraw his resignation and to remain in her service. Sir Robert of course could only comply. The Duke of Buccleuch withdrew his opposition to the policy which Peel was now to carry out; but Lord Stanley remained firm. The place of the latter was taken, as Secretary of State for the Colonies, by Mr. Gladstone, who however curiously enough remained without a seat in Parliament during the eventful session that was now to come. Mr. Gladstone had sat for the borough of Newark, but that borough being under the influence of the Duke of Newcastle, who had withdrawn his support from the Ministry, he did not invite re-election, but remained without a seat in the House of Commons for some months. Sir Robert Peel then, to use his own words, resumed power 'with greater means of rendering public service than I should have had if I had not relinquished it.' He felt, he said, 'like a man restored to life after his funeral sermon had been preached.'

Parliament was summoned to meet in January. In the meantime it was easily seen how the Protectionists and the Tories of the extreme order generally would regard the proposals of Sir Robert Peel. Protectionist meetings were held in various parts of the country, and they were all but unanimous in condemning by anticipation the policy of the restored Premier. Resolutions were passed at many of these meetings expressing an equal disbelief in the Prime Minister and in the famine. The utmost indignation was expressed at the idea of there being any famine in prospect which could cause any departure from

the principles which secured to the farmers a certain fixed price for their grain, or at least prevented the price from falling below what they considered a paying amount.

Parliament met. The opening day was January 22, 1846. There are few scenes more animated and exciting than that presented by the House of Commons on some night when a great debate is expected, or when some momentous announcement is to be made. A common thrill seems to tremble all through the assembly as a breath of wind runs across the sea. The House appears for the moment to be one body pervaded by one expectation. The Ministerial benches, the front benches of opposition, are occupied by the men of political renown and of historic name. The benches everywhere else are crowded to their utmost capacity. Members who cannot get seats—on such an occasion a goodly number—stand below the bar or have to dispose themselves along the side galleries. The celebrities are not confined to the Treasury benches or those of the leaders of opposition. Here and there, among the independent members and below the gangway on both sides, are seen men of influence and renown. The strangers' gallery, the Speaker's gallery on such a night are crowded to excess. The eye surveys the whole House and sees no vacant place. In the very hum of conversation that runs along the benches there is a tone of profound anxiety. The minister who has to face that House and make the announcement for which all are waiting in a most feverish anxiety is a man to be envied by the ambitious.

The Prime Minister went into long and laboured explanations of the manner in which his mind had been brought into a change on the subject of Free Trade and Protection, and he gave exhaustive calculations to show that the reduction of duty was constantly followed by expansion of the revenue, and even a maintenance of high prices. The duties on glass, the duties on flax, the prices of salt pork and domestic lard, the contract price of salt beef for the navy—these and many other such topics were discussed at great length, and with elaborate fulness of detail. in the hearing of an eager House anxious only for that night to know whether or not the minister meant to introduce the principle of Free Trade. Peel, however, made it clear enough that he had become a complete convert to the doctrines of the Manchester school, and that in his opinion the time had come when that protection he had taken office to maintain must for ever be abandoned

The explanation was over. The House of Commons were left rather to infer than to understand what the Government proposed to do. There appeared therefore nothing for it but to wait until the time should come for the formal announcement and the full discussion of the Government measures. Suddenly, however, a new and striking figure intervened in the languishing debate, and filled the House of Commons with a fresh life. There is not often to be found in our Parliamentary history an example like this of a sudden turn given to a whole career by a timely speech. The member who rose to comment on the explanation of Sir Robert Peel had been for many years in the House of Commons. This was his tenth session. He had spoken often in each session. He had made many bold attempts to win a name in Parliament, and hitherto his political career had been simply a failure. From the hour when he spoke this speech, it was one long, unbroken, brilliant success.

CHAPTER VII.

MR. DISRAELI.

THE speaker who rose into such sudden prominence and something like the position of a party leader was one of the most remarkable men the politics of the reign have produced. Mr. Disraeli entered the House of Commons as Conservative member for Maidstone in 1837. He was then about thirty-two years of age. He had previously made repeated and unsuccessful attempts to get a seat in Parliament. He began his political career as an advanced Liberal, and had described himself as one who desired to fight the battle of the people, and who was supported by neither of the aristocratic parties. He failed again and again, and apparently he began to think that it would be a wiser thing to look for the support of one or other of the aristocratic parties. He had before this given indications of remarkable literary capacity. His novel, 'Vivian Grey,' published when he was in his twenty-third year, was suffused with extravagance, affectation and mere animal spirits; but it was full of the evidences of a fresh and brilliant ability. The son of a distinguished literary man, Mr. Disraeli had probably at that time only a young literary man's notions of politics. It is not necessary to charge him with deliberate in-

consistency because from having been a Radical of the most advanced views he became by an easy leap a romantic Tory. It is not likely that at the beginning of his career he had any very clear ideas in connection with the words Tory or Radical. When young Disraeli found that advanced Radicalism did not do much to get him into Parliament, he probably began to ask himself whether his Liberal convictions were so deeply rooted as to call for the sacrifice of a career. He thought the question over, and doubtless found himself crystallising fast into an advocate of the established order of things.

No trace of the progress of conversion can be found in his speeches or his writings. It is not unreasonable to infer that he took up Radicalism at the beginning because it looked the most picturesque and romantic thing to do, and that only as he found it fail to answer his personal object did it occur to him that he had after all more affinity with the cause of the country gentlemen. The reputation he had made for himself before his going into Parliament was of a nature rather calculated to retard than to advance a political career. He was looked upon almost universally as an eccentric and audacious adventurer, who was kept from being dangerous by the affectations and absurdities of his conduct. He dressed in the extremest style of preposterous foppery; he talked a blending of cynicism and sentiment; he made the most reckless statements; his boasting was almost outrageous; his rhetoric of abuse was, even in that free-spoken time, astonishingly vigorous and unrestrained. Even then his literary efforts did not then receive anything like the appreciation they have obtained since. At that time they were regarded rather as audacious whimsicalities, the fantastic freaks of a clever youth, than as genuine works of a certain kind of art. Even when he did get into the House of Commons, his first experience there was little calculated to give him much hope of success. Reading over his first speech now, it seems hard to understand why it should have excited so much laughter and derision; why it should have called forth nothing but laughter and derision. It is a clever speech, full of point and odd conceits; very like in style and structure many of the speeches which in later years won for the same orator the applause of the House of Commons. But Mr. Disraeli's reputation had preceded him into the House. The House was probably in a humour to find the speech ridiculous because the general impression was that the man himself was ridiculous. Mr. Disraeli's appearance, too, no

doubt contributed something to the contemptuous opinion which was formed of him on his first attempt to address the assembly which he afterwards came to rule. He is described by an observer as having been 'attired in a bottle-green frock coat and a waistcoat of white, of the Dick Swiveller pattern, the front of which exhibited a network of glittering chains; large fancy pattern pantaloons, and a black tie, above which no shirt collar was visible, completed the outward man. A countenance lividly pale, set out by a pair of intensely black eyes, and a broad but not very high forehead, overhung by clustering ringlets of coal-black hair, which, combed away from the right temple, fell in bunches of well-oiled small ringlets over his left cheek.' His manner was intensely theatric; his gestures were wild and extravagant. Mr. Disraeli made not merely a failure, but even a ludicrous failure. One who heard the debate thus describes the manner in which, baffled by the persistent laughter and other interruptions of the noisy House, the orator withdrew from the discussion defeated but not discouraged. 'At last, losing his temper, which until now he had preserved in a wonderful manner, he paused in the midst of a sentence, and looking the Liberals indignantly in the face, raised his hands, and opening his mouth as widely as its dimensions would admit, said in a remarkably loud and almost terrific tone, "I have begun several times many things, and I have often succeeded at last; ay, sir, and though I sit down now, the time will come when you will hear me."'

Disraeli was not in the least discouraged by his first failure. A few days after it he spoke again, and he spoke three or four times more during his first session. But he had earned some wisdom by rough experience, and he did not make his oratorical flights so long or so ambitious as that first attempt. Then he seemed after a while, as he grew more familiar with the House, to go in for being paradoxical; for making himself always conspicuous; for taking up positions and expounding political creeds which other men would have avoided. It is very difficult to get any clear idea of what his opinions were about this period of his career, if he had any political opinions at all. He spoke on subjects of which it was evident that he knew nothing, and sometimes he managed by the sheer force of a strong intelligence to discern the absurdity of economic sophistries which had baffled men of far greater experience, and which indeed, to judge from his

personal declarations and political conduct afterwards, he allowed before long to baffle and bewilder himself. More often, however, he talked with a grandiose and oracular vagueness which seemed to imply that he alone of all men saw into the very heart of the question, but that he, of all men, must not yet reveal what he saw. Mr. Disraeli was at one period of his career so affected that he positively affected affectation. Yet he was a man of undoubted genius; he had a spirit that never quailed under stress of any circumstances, however disheartening.

For some time Mr. Disraeli then seemed resolved to make himself remarkable—to be talked about. He succeeded admirably. He was talked about. All the political and satirical journals of the day had a great deal to say about him. He is not spoken of in terms of praise as a rule. Neither has he much praise to shower about him. Anyone who looks back to the political controversies of that time will be astounded at the language which Mr. Disraeli addresses to his opponents of the press, and which his opponents address to him. The duelling system survived then and for long after, and Mr. Disraeli always professed himself ready to sustain with his pistol anything that his lips might have given utterance to, even in the reckless heat of controversy. He kept himself well up to the level of his time in the calling of names and the swaggering. But he was making himself remarkable in political controversy as well. In the House of Commons he began to be regarded as a dangerous adversary in debate. He was wonderfully ready with retort and sarcasm. But during all the earlier part of his career he was thought of only as a free lance. He had praised Peel when Peel said something that suited him, or when to praise Peel seemed likely to wound someone else. But it was during the discussions on the abolition of the Corn Laws that he first rose to the fame of a great debater and a powerful Parliamentary orator.

Hitherto he had wanted a cause to inspire and justify audacity, and on which to employ with effect his remarkable resources of sarcasm and rhetoric. Hitherto he had addressed an audience for the most part out of sympathy with him. Now he was about to become the spokesman of a large body of men who, chafing and almost choking with wrath, were not capable of speaking effectively for themselves. Mr. Disraeli did therefore the very wisest thing he could do when

he launched at once into a savage personal attack upon Sir Robert Peel.

From that hour Mr. Disraeli was the real leader of the Tory squires; from that moment his voice gave the word of command to the Tory party. Disraeli made his own career by the course he took on that memorable night, and he also made a new career for the Tory party.

One immediate effect of the turn thus given by Disraeli's timely intervention in the debate was the formation of a Protection party in the House of Commons. The leadership of this perilous adventure was entrusted to Lord George Bentinck, a sporting nobleman of energetic character, great tenacity of purpose and conviction, and a not inconsiderable aptitude for politics which had hitherto had no opportunity for either exercising or displaying itself. Lord George Bentinck had sat in eight Parliaments without taking part in any great debate. When he was suddenly drawn into the leadership of the Protection party in the House of Commons, he gave himself up to it entirely. He had at first only joined the party as one of its organisers; but he showed himself in many respects well fitted for the leadership, and the choice of leaders was in any case very limited. When once he had accepted the position he was unwearying in his attention to its duties; and indeed up to the moment of his sudden and premature death he never allowed himself any relaxation from the cares it imposed on him. Bentinck's abilities were hardly even of the second class; and the amount of knowledge which he brought to bear on the questions he discussed with so much earnestness and energy was often and of necessity little better than mere cram. But in Parliament the essential qualities of a leader are not great powers of intellect. A man of cool head, good temper, firm will, and capacity for appreciating the serviceable qualities of other men, may, always provided that he has high birth and great social influence, make a very successful leader, even though he be wanting altogether in the higher attributes of eloquence and statesmanship. Bentinck had patience, energy, good humour, and considerable appreciation of the characters of men. If he had a bad voice, and was a poor speaker, he at least always spoke in full faith, and was only the more necessary to his party because he could honestly continue to believe in the old doctrines, no matter what political economy and hard facts might say to the contrary.

The secession was, therefore, in full course of organisation. On January 27 Sir Robert Peel came forward to explain his financial policy. His object was to abandon the sliding scale altogether; but for the present he intended to impose a duty of ten shillings a quarter on corn when the price of it was under forty-eight shillings a quarter; to reduce that duty by one shilling for every shilling of rise in price until it reached fifty-three shillings a quarter, when the duty should fall to four shillings. This arrangement was, however, only to hold good for three years, at the end of which time protective duties on grain were to be wholly abandoned. Peel explained that he intended gradually to apply the principle of Free Trade to manufactures and every description of produce, bearing in mind the necessity of providing for the expenditure of the country, and of smoothing away some of the difficulties which a sudden withdrawal of protection might cause. The differential duties on sugar, which were professedly intended to protect the growers of free sugars against the competition of those who cultivated sugar by the use of slave labour, were to be diminished but not abolished. The duties on the importation of foreign cattle were to be at once removed.

The proposals of the Ministry did not wholly satisfy the professed Free Traders. These latter would have enforced, if they could, an immediate application of the principle without the interval of three years, and the devices and shifts which were to be put in operation during that middle time. But, of course, they had no idea of not taking what they could get.

The third reading of the bill passed the House of Commons on May 15, by a majority of 98 votes. The bill was at once sent up to the House of Lords, and by means chiefly of the earnest advice of the Duke of Wellington, was carried through that House without much serious opposition. But June 25, the day when the bill was read for a third time in the House of Lords, was a memorable day in the Parliamentary annals of England. It saw the fall of the Ministry who had carried to success the greatest piece of legislation that had been introduced since Lord Grey's Reform Bill.

A Coercion Bill for Ireland was the measure which brought this catastrophe on the Government of Sir Robert Peel. While the Corn Bill was yet passing through the House of Commons the Government felt called upon, in consequence of the condition of crime and outrage in Ireland, to introduce a Coercion Bill. This placed them in a serious difficulty. All

the Irish followers of O'Connell would of course oppose the coercion measure. The Whigs when out of office have usually made it a rule to oppose coercion bills if they do not come accompanied with some promises of legislative reform and concession. The English Radical members, Mr. Cobden and his followers, were almost sure to oppose it. Under these circumstances, it seemed probable enough that if the Protectionists joined with the other opponents of the Coercion Bill, the Government must be defeated. The temptation was too great. The fiercer Protectionists voted with the Free Traders, the Whigs, and the Irish Catholic and Liberal members, and after a debate of much bitterness and passion, the division on the second reading of the Coercion Bill took place on Thursday, June 25, and the Ministry were left in a minority of 73. Some eighty of the Protectionists followed Lord George Bentinck into the lobby to vote against the bill, and their votes settled the question. Chance had put within their grasp the means of vengeance, and they had seized it, and made successful use of it. The Peel Ministry had fallen in its very hour of triumph.

Three days after Sir Robert Peel announced his resignation of office. So great a success followed by so sudden and complete a fall is hardly recorded in the Parliamentary history of our modern times. Peel had crushed O'Connell and carried Free Trade, and O'Connell and the Protectionists had life enough yet to pull him down. He is as a conqueror who, having won the great victory of his life, is struck by a hostile hand in some by-way as he passes home to enjoy his triumph.

CHAPTER VIII.

FAMINE AND POLITICAL TROUBLE.

Lord John Russell succeeded Sir Robert Peel as First Lord of the Treasury; Lord Palmerston became Foreign Secretary; Sir Charles Wood was Chancellor of the Exchequer; Lord Grey took charge of the Colonies; and Sir George Grey was Home Secretary. Mr. Macaulay accepted the office of Paymaster-General, with a seat in the Cabinet, a distinction not usually given to the occupant of that office. The Ministry was not particularly strong in administrative talent. The Premier and the Foreign Secretary were the only members of the

Cabinet who could be called statesmen of the first class; and even Lord Palmerston had not as yet won more than a somewhat doubtful kind of fame, and was looked upon as a man quite as likely to do mischief as good to any Ministry of which he might happen to form a part. Lord Grey then and since only succeeded somehow in missing the career of a leading statesman. He had great talents and some originality; he was independent and bold. But his independence degenerated too often into impracticability and even eccentricity; and he was, in fact, a politician with whom ordinary men could not work. Sir Charles Wood, the new Chancellor of the Exchequer, had solid sense and excellent administrative capacity, but he was about as bad a public speaker as ever addressed the House of Commons. His budget speeches were often made so unintelligible by defective manner and delivery that they might almost as well have been spoken in a foreign language. Sir George Grey was a speaker of fearful fluency, and a respectable administrator of the second or third class. He was as plodding in administration as he was precipitate of speech.

The position of the Government of Lord John Russell was not one to be envied. The Irish famine occupied all attention, and soon seemed to be an evil too great for any Ministry to deal with. The failure of the potato was an overwhelming disaster for a people almost wholly agricultural and a peasantry long accustomed to live upon that root alone. Ireland contains very few large towns; when the names of four or five are mentioned the list is done with, and we have to come to mere villages. The country has hardly any manufactures except that of linen in the northern province. In the south and west the people live by agriculture alone. The cottier system, which prevailed almost universally in three of the four provinces, was an arrangement by which a man obtained in return for his labour a right to cultivate a little patch of ground, just enough to supply him with food for the scanty maintenance of his family. The great landlords were for the most part absentees; the smaller landlords were often deeply in debt, and were therefore compelled to screw every possible penny of rent out of their tenants-at-will.

Underlying all the relations of landlord and tenant in Ireland were two great facts. The occupation of land was virtually a necessity of life to the Irish tenant. That is the first fact. The second is, that the land system under which Ireland was placed was one entirely foreign to the traditions,

the ideas, one might say the very genius, of the Irish people. The Irish peasant regarded the right to have a bit of land, his share, exactly as other peoples regard the right to live. It was in his mind something elementary and self-evident. He could not be loyal to, he could not even understand, any system which did not secure that to him.

The Irish peasant with his wife and his family lived on the potato. Not a county in Ireland wholly escaped the potato disease, and many of the southern and western counties were soon in actual famine. A peculiar form of fever—famine-fever it was called—began to show itself everywhere. A terrible dysentery set in as well. In some districts the people died in hundreds daily from fever, dysentery, or sheer starvation. It would have been impossible that in such a country as Ireland a famine of that gigantic kind should set in without bringing crimes of violence along with it. Unfortunately the Government had to show an immense activity in the introduction of Coercion Bills and other repressive measures.

Whatever might be said of the Government, no one could doubt the goodwill of the English people. National Relief Associations were especially formed in England. Relief indeed began to be poured in from all countries. The misery went on deepening and broadening. It was far too great to be effectually encountered by subscriptions however generous; and the Government, meaning to do the best they could, were practically at their wits' end. The starving peasants streamed into the nearest considerable town hoping for relief there, and found too often that there the very sources of charity were dried up. Many, very many, thus disappointed, merely laid down on the pavement and died there. Along the country roads one met everywhere groups of gaunt, dim-eyed wretches clad in miserable old sacking and wandering aimlessly with some vague idea of finding food, as the boy in the fable hoped to find the gold where the rainbow touched the earth. Many remained in their empty hovels and took Death there when he came. In some regions the country seemed unpeopled for miles.

When the famine was over and its results came to be estimated, it was found that Ireland had lost about two millions of her population. She had come down from eight millions to six. This was the combined effect of starvation, of the various diseases that followed in its path gleaning where it had failed to gather, and of emigration. Long after all the direct effects of the failure of the potato had ceased, the

population still continued steadily to decrease. The Irish peasant had in fact had his eyes turned, as Mr. Bright afterwards expressed it, towards the setting sun, and for long years the stream of emigration westward never abated in its volume. A new Ireland began to grow up across the Atlantic. In every great city of the United States the Irish element began to form a considerable constituent of the population.

The Government had hard work to do all this time. Lord George Bentinck was able to worry the Ministry somewhat effectively when they introduced a measure to reduce gradually the differential duties on sugar for a few years, and then replace these duties by a fixed and uniform rate. This was in short a proposal to apply the principle of Free Trade, instead of Protection, to sugar. Lord George Bentinck therefore proposed an amendment to the resolutions of the Government, declaring it unjust and impolitic to reduce the duty on foreign slave-grown sugar, as tending to check the advance of production by British free labour, and to give a great additional stimulus to slave labour. Many sincere and independent opponents of slavery, Lord Brougham in the House of Lords among them, were caught by this view of the question. Lord George and his brilliant lieutenant at one time appeared as if they were likely to carry their point in the Commons. But it was announced that if the resolutions of the Government were defeated ministers would resign, and there was no one to take their place. Peel could not return to power; and the time was far distant yet when Mr. Disraeli could form a Ministry. The opposition crumbled away therefore, and the Government measures were carried.

There were troubles abroad as well as at home for the Government. Almost immediately on their coming into office, the project of the Spanish Marriages, concocted between King Louis Philippe and his minister, M. Guizot, disturbed for a time and very seriously the good understanding between England and France. In an evil hour for themselves and their fame, Louis Philippe and his minister believed that they could obtain a virtual ownership of Spain by an ingenious marriage scheme There was at one time a project talked of rather than actually entertained, of marrying the young Queen of Spain and her sister to the Duc d'Aumale and the Duc de Montpensier, both sons of Louis Philippe. But this would have been too daring a venture on the part of the King of the French. Apart from any objections to be entertained by other States, it was certain

that England could not 'view with indifference,' as the diplomatic phrase goes, the prospect of a son of the French King occupying the throne of Spain.

Louis Philippe knew very well that he could not venture to marry one of his sons to the young Isabella. But he and his minister devised a scheme for securing to themselves and their policy the same effect in another way. They contrived that the Queen and her sister should be married at the same time—the Queen to her cousin, Don Francisco d'Assis, Duke of Cadiz; and her sister to the Duke de Montpensier, Louis Philippe's son. There was reason to expect that the Queen, if married to Don Francisco, would have no children, and that the wife of Louis Philippe's son, or some one of her children, would come to the throne of Spain.

This scheme proved a failure, so far as the objects of Louis Philippe and his minister were concerned. Queen Isabella had children; Montpensier's wife did not come to the throne; and the dynasty of Louis Philippe fell before long. But the friendship between England and France, from which so many happy results seemed likely to come to Europe, and the cause of free government, was necessarily interrupted for a time.

The year 1848 was an era in the modern history of Europe. It was the year of unfulfilled revolutions. The fall of the dynasty of Louis Philippe may be said to have set the revolutionary tide flowing.

Louis Philippe fled to England, and his flight was the signal for long pent-up fires to break out all over Europe. Revolution soon was aflame in nearly all the capitals of the Continent. Revolution is like an epidemic; it finds out the weak places in systems. The two European countries which being tried by it stood it best, were England and Belgium. In the latter country the King made frank appeal to his people, and told them that if they wished to be rid of him he was quite willing to go. Language of this kind was new in the mouths of sovereigns; and the Belgians were a people well able to appreciate it. They declared for their King and the shock of the revolution passed harmlessly away. In England and Ireland the effect of the events in France was instantly made manifest. The Chartist agitation, which had been much encouraged by the triumphant return of Feargus O'Connor for Nottingham at the general election of 1847, at once came to a head.

It was determined to present a monster petition to the

House of Commons demanding the Charter, and in fact offering a last chance to Parliament to yield quietly to the demand. The petition was to be presented by a deputation who were to be conducted by a vast procession up to the doors of the House. The procession was to be formed on Kennington Common, the space then unenclosed which is now Kennington Park, on the south side of London. There the Chartists were to be addressed by their still trusted leader, Feargus O'Connor, and they were to march in military order to present their petition. The object undoubtedly was to make such a parade of physical force as should overawe the Legislature and the Government, and demonstrate the impossibility of refusing a demand backed by such a reserve of power. The proposed procession was declared illegal, and all peaceful and loyal subjects were warned not to take any part in it. But this was exactly what the more ardent among the Chartists expected and desired to see.

At a meeting of the Chartist Convention held the night before the demonstration, a considerable number were for going armed to Kennington Common. Feargus O'Connor had, however, sense enough still left to throw the weight of his influence against such an insane proceeding, and to insist that the demonstration must show itself to be, as it was from the first proclaimed to be, a strictly pacific proceeding The more ardent spirits at once withdrew from the organisation. Those who might even at the very last have done mischief if they had remained part of the movement, withdrew from it; and Chartism was left to be represented by an open air meeting and a petition to Parliament, like all the other demonstrations that the metropolis had seen to pass, hardly heeded, across the field of politics. But the public at large was not aware that the fangs of Chartism had been drawn before it was let loose to play on Kennington Common that memorable tenth of April. London awoke in great alarm that day. The wildest rumours were spread abroad in many parts of the metropolis. Long before the Chartists had got together on Kennington Common at all, various remote quarters of London were filled with horrifying reports of encounters between the insurgents and the police or the military, in which the Chartists invariably had the better, and as a result of which they were marching in full force to the particular district where the momentary panic prevailed. London is worse off than most cities in such a time of alarm.

It is too large for true accounts of things rapidly to diffuse themselves. In April 1848, the street telegraph was not in use for carrying news through cities, and the rapidly succeeding editions of the cheap papers were as yet unknown. In various quarters of London, therefore, the citizen was left through the greater part of the day to all the agonies of doubt and uncertainty.

There was no lack, however, of public precautions against an outbreak of armed Chartism. The Duke of Wellington took charge of all the arrangements for guarding the public buildings and defending the metropolis generally. He acted with extreme caution, and told several influential persons that troops were in readiness everywhere, but that they would not be seen unless an occasion actually rose for calling on their services. The coolness and presence of mind of the stern old soldier are well illustrated in the fact that to several persons of influence and authority who came to him with suggestions for the defence of this place or that, his almost invariable answer was 'Done already,' or 'Done two hours ago,' or something of the kind. A vast number of Londoners enrolled themselves as special constables for the maintenance of law and order. Nearly two hundred thousand persons, it is said, were sworn in for this purpose; and it will always be told as an odd incident of that famous scare that the Prince Louis Napoleon, then living in London, was one of those who volunteered to bear arms in the preservation of order. Not a long time was to pass away before the most lawless outrage on the order and life of a peaceful city was to be perpetrated by the special command of the man who was so ready to lend the saving aid of his constable's staff to protect English society against some poor hundreds or thousands of English working men.

The crisis, however, luckily proved not to stand in need of such saviours of society. The Chartist demonstration was a wretched failure. The meeting on Kennington Common, so far from being a gathering of half a million of men, was not a larger concourse than a temperance demonstration had often drawn together on the same spot. The procession was not formed, O'Connor himself strongly insisting on obedience to the orders of the authorities. The great Chartist petition itself, which was to have made so profound an impression on the House of Commons, proved as utter a failure as the demonstration on Kennington Common. It was made certain

that the number of genuine signatures was ridiculously below the estimate formed by the Chartist leaders; and the agitation, after terrifying respectability for a long time, suddenly showed itself a thing only to be laughed at.

Here comes not inappropriately to an end the history of English Chartism. It died of publicity; of exposure to the air; of the Anti-Corn Law League; of the evident tendency of the time to settle all questions by reason, argument, and majorities; of growing education; of a strengthening sense of duty among all the more influential classes. All that was sound in its claims asserted itself and was in time conceded. But its active or aggressive influence ceased with 1848. Not since that year has there been any serious talk or thought of any agitation asserting its claims by the use or even display of armed force in England.

The spirit of the time had meanwhile made itself felt in a different way in Ireland. For some months before the beginning of the year the Young Ireland party had been established as a rival association to the Repealers who still believed in the policy of O'Connell. The *Nation* newspaper was conducted and written for by some rising young men of high culture and remarkable talent. It was inspired in the beginning by at least one genuine poet, Mr. Thomas Davis, who unfortunately died in his youth. The Young Ireland party had received a new support by the adhesion of Mr. William Smith O'Brien to their ranks. Mr. O'Brien was a man of considerable influence in Ireland. He had a large property and high rank. He was connected with or related to many aristocratic families. His brother was Lord Inchiquin; the title of the Marquisate of Thomond was in the family. He was undoubtedly descended from the famous Irish hero and king Brian Boru, and was inordinately proud of his claims of long descent. He had the highest personal character and the finest sense of honour; but his capacity for leadership of any movement was very slender. His adhesion to the cause of Young Ireland gave the movement a decided impulse. His rank, his legendary descent, his undoubted chivalry of character and purity of purpose lent a romantic interest to his appearance as the recognised leader, or at least the figure-head, of the Young Irelanders.

Smith O'Brien was a man of more mature years than most of his companions in the movement. He was some forty-three or four years of age when he took the leadership of the move-

ment. Thomas Francis Meagher, the most brilliant orator of the party, a man who under other conditions might have risen to great distinction in public life, was then only about two or three-and-twenty. Mitchel and Duffy, who were regarded as elders among the Young Irelanders, were perhaps each some thirty years of age.

Before the death of O'Connell the formal secession of the Young Ireland party from the regular Repealers had taken place. The Continental revolutions of the year 1848 suddenly converted the movement from a literary and poetical organisation into a rebellious conspiracy. The fever of that wild epoch spread itself at once over Ireland. In the meantime a fresh and a stronger influence than that of O'Brien or Meagher had arisen in Young Irelandism. Young Ireland itself now split into two sections, one for immediate action, the other for caution and delay. The party of action acknowledged the leadership of John Mitchel. The organ of this section was the newspaper started by Mitchel in opposition to the *Nation*, which had grown too slow for him. The new journal was called the *United Irishman*, and in a short time completely distanced the *Nation* in popularity and in circulation. The deliberate policy of the *United Irishman* was to force the hand first of the Government and then of the Irish people. Mitchel had made up his mind so to rouse the passion of the people as to compel the Government to take steps for the prevention of rebellion by the arrest of some of the leaders. Then Mitchel calculated upon the populace rising to defend or rescue their heroes—and then the game would be afoot; Ireland would be entered in rebellion; and the rest would be for fate to decide.

The Government brought in a bill for the better security of the Crown and Government, making all written incitement to insurrection or resistance to the law, felony punishable with transportation. This measure was passed rapidly through all its stages. It enabled the Government to suppress newspapers like the *United Irishman*, and to keep in prison without bail, while awaiting trial, anyone charged with an offence under the new Act. Mitchel soon gave the authorities an opportunity of testing the efficacy of the Act in his person. He repeated his incitements to insurrection, was arrested and thrown into prison. The climax of the excitement in Ireland was reached when Mitchel's trial came on. There can be little doubt that he was filled with a strong hope that his

followers would attempt to rescue him. Had there been another Mitchel out of doors, as fearless and reckless as the Mitchel in the prison, a sanguinary outbreak would probably have taken place. But the leaders of the movement outside were by no means clear in their own minds as to the course they ought to pursue. They discouraged any idea of an attempt to rescue Mitchel. His trial came on. He was found guilty. He made a short but powerful and impassioned speech from the dock; he was sentenced to fourteen years' transportation; he was hurried under an escort of cavalry through the streets of Dublin, put on board a ship of war, and in a few hours was on his way to Bermuda. Dublin remained perfectly quiet; the country outside hardly knew what was happening until Mitchel was well on his way, and far-seeing persons smiled to themselves and said the danger was over.

So indeed it proved to be. The Government suspended the Habeas Corpus Act in Ireland, and issued warrants for the arrest of Smith O'Brien, Meagher, and other confederate leaders. Smith O'Brien, Meagher, Dillon, and others left Dublin and went down into the country. They held a series of gatherings which might be described as meetings of agitators or marshallings of rebels, according as one was pleased to interpret their purpose. But this sort of thing very soon drifted into rebellion. The principal body of the followers of Smith O'Brien came into collision with the police at a place called Ballingarry, in Tipperary. The police fired a few volleys. The rebels fired, with what wretched muskets and rifles they possessed, but without harming a single policeman. After a few of their number had been killed or wounded—it never was perfectly certain that any were actually killed—the rebel band dispersed, and the rebellion was all over.

Smith O'Brien, Meagher, and some of their companions were arrested. The prisoners were brought for trial before a special commission held at Clonmel, in Tipperary, in the following September. Smith O'Brien was the first put on trial, and was found guilty. He was sentenced to death after the old form in cases of high treason—to be hanged, beheaded, and quartered. Meagher was afterwards found guilty, and sentenced to death with the same hideous formalities. No one, however, really believed for a moment that such a sentence was likely to be carried out in the reign of Queen Victoria. The sentence of death was changed into one of transportation for life. The convicts were all sent to Australia, and a few years after Meagher con-

trived to make his escape. He was soon followed by Mitchel. Smith O'Brien himself afterwards received a pardon on condition of his not returning to these islands; but this condition was withdrawn after a time, and he came back to Ireland. He died quietly in Wales in 1864. Mitchel settled for a while in Richmond, Virginia, and became an ardent advocate of slavery and an impassioned champion of the Southern rebellion. He returned to the North after the rebellion, and more lately came to Ireland, where, owing to some defect in the criminal law, he could not be arrested, his time of penal servitude having expired although he had not served it. He was still a hero with many of the people; he was put up as a candidate for an Irish county and elected. He was not allowed to enter the House of Commons, however; the election was declared void, and a new writ was issued. He was elected again, and some turmoil was expected, when suddenly Mitchel, who had long been in sinking health, was withdrawn from the controversy by death. Meagher served in the army of the Federal States when the war broke out, and showed much of the soldier's spirit and capacity. His end was premature and inglorious. He fell from the deck of a steamer one night; it was dark and there was a strong current running; help came too late. A false step, a dark night, and the muddy waters of the Missouri closed the career that had opened with so much promise of brightness.

Many of the conspicuous Young Irelanders rose to some distinction. Charles Gavan Duffy, the editor of the *Nation*, who was twice put on his trial after the failure of the insurrection, but whom a jury would not on either occasion convict, became a member of the House of Commons, and afterwards emigrated to the colony of Victoria. He rose to be Prime Minister there, and received knighthood from the Crown, and a pension from the Colonial Parliament. Thomas Darcy M'Gee, another prominent rebel, went to the United States, and thence to Canada, where he rose to be a minister of the Crown. He was one of the most loyal supporters of the British connection. His untimely death by the hand of an assassin was lamented in England as well as in the colony he had served so well.

CHAPTER IX.

ATHENS, ROME AND LONDON.

THE name of Don Pacifico was familiar to the world some quarter of a century ago as that of the man whose quarrel had nearly brought on a European war, had caused a temporary disturbance of good relations between England and France, split up political parties in England in a manner hardly ever known before, and established the reputation of Lord Palmerston as one of the greatest Parliamentary debaters of his time.

Don Pacifico was a Jew, a Portuguese by extraction, but a native of Gibraltar and a British subject living in Athens. It had been customary in Greek towns to celebrate Easter by burning an effigy of Judas Iscariot. In 1847 the police of Athens were ordered to prevent this performance, and the mob, disappointed of their favourite amusement, ascribed the new orders to the influence of the Jews. Don Pacifico's house happened to stand near the spot where the Judas was annually burnt; Don Pacifico was known to be a Jew; and the anger of the mob was wreaked upon him accordingly. Don Pacifico made a claim against the Greek Government for compensation for nearly thirty-two thousand pounds sterling. Another claim was made at the same time by another British subject, a man of a very different stamp from Don Pacifico. This was Mr. Finlay, the historian of Greece. Mr. Finlay had settled in Athens when the independence of Greece had been established. Some of his land had been taken for the purpose of rounding off the new palace gardens of King Otho; and Mr. Finlay had declined to accept the terms offered by the Greek Government, to which other landowners in the same position as himself had assented.

None of these questions would seem at first sight to wear a very grave international character. Unluckily Lord Palmerston became possessed with the idea that the French minister in Greece was secretly setting the Greek Government on to resist our claims. For the Foreign Office had made the claims ours, and insisted that Greece must pay up within a given time or take the consequences. Greece hesitated, and accordingly the British fleet was sent to the Piræus, and seized all the Greek vessels belonging to the Government and to private merchants that were found within the waters.

The Greek Government appealed to France and Russia as powers joined with us in the treaty to protect the independence of Greece. France and Russia were both disposed to make bitter complaint of not having been consulted in the first instance by the British Government; nor was their feeling greatly softened by Lord Palmerston's peremptory reply that it was all a question between England and Greece, with which no other power had any business to interfere. At last something like a friendly arbitration was accepted from France, and the French Government sent a special representative to Athens to try to come to terms with our minister there. The difficulties appeared likely to be adjusted. But some spirit of mischief seemed to have this unlucky affair in charge from the first. A new quarrel threatened at one time to break out between England and France. The French Government actually withdrew their ambassador, M. Drouyn de Lhuys, from London; and there was for a short time a general alarm over Europe. But after a while our Government gave way, and agreed to an arrangement which was in the main all that France desired. When, after a long lapse of time, the arbitrators came to settle the claims of Don Pacifico, it was found that he was entitled to about one-thirtieth of the sum he had originally demanded. Don Pacifico, it seems, charged in his bill one hundred and fifty pounds sterling for a bedstead, thirty pounds for the sheets of the bed, twenty-five pounds for two coverlets, and ten pounds for a pillow-case. The jewellery of his wife and daughters he estimated at two thousand pounds. It seems too that he had always lived in a humble sort of way, and was never supposed by his neighbours to possess such splendour of ornament and household goods.

While the controversy between the English and French Governments was yet unfinished, Lord Stanley proposed in the House of Lords a resolution which was practically a vote of censure on the Government. The resolution was carried, after a debate of great spirit and energy, by a majority of thirty-seven. Lord Palmerston was not dismayed. A Ministry is seldom greatly troubled by an adverse vote in the House of Lords. Still it was necessary that something should be done in the Commons to counterbalance the stroke of the Lords, and accordingly Mr. Roebuck, acting as an independent member, although on this occasion in harmony with the Government, brought forward on June 24, 1850, a resolution which boldly affirmed that the principles on which the foreign policy of the Government had been

regulated were 'such as were calculated to maintain the honour and dignity of this country; and in times of unexampled difficulty to preserve peace between England and the various nations of the world.'

Among those who condemned the policy of Lord Palmerston were Mr. Gladstone, Mr. Cobden, Sir Robert Peel, Sir William Molesworth, and Mr. Sidney Herbert in the Commons. In the House of Lords, Lord Brougham, Lord Canning, and Lord Aberdeen had supported the resolution of Lord Stanley. The principal interest of the debate now rests in the manner of Lord Palmerston's defence. That speech was indeed a masterpiece of Parliamentary argument and address. Lord Palmerston really made it appear as if the question between him and his opponents was that of the protection of Englishmen abroad; as if he were anxious to look after their lives and safety, while his opponents were urging the odious principle that when once an Englishman put his foot on a foreign shore his own Government renounced all intent to concern themselves with any fate that might befall him. In a peroration of thrilling power Lord Palmerston asked for the verdict of the House to decide 'whether, as the Roman in days of old held himself free from indignity when he could say "I am a Roman citizen," so also a British subject, in whatever land he may be, shall feel confident that the watchful eye and the strong arm of England will protect him against injustice and wrong.' When Lord Palmerston closed his speech the overwhelming plaudits of the House foretold the victory he had won. It was indeed a masterpiece of telling defence. The speech occupied some five hours in delivery. It was spoken, as Mr. Gladstone afterwards said, from the dusk of one day to the dawn of the next. It was spoken without the help of a single note.

After a debate of four nights, a majority of forty-six was given for the resolution. The Ministry came out not only absolved but triumphant. The odd thing about the whole proceeding is that the ministers in general heartily disapproved of the sort of policy which Palmerston defended so eloquently and put so energetically into action—at least they disapproved, if not his principles, yet certainly his way of enforcing them. Of many fine speeches made during this brilliant debate we must notice one in particular. It was that of Mr. Cockburn, then member for Southampton. Never in our time has a reputation been more suddenly, completely, and deservedly made than Mr. Cockburn won by his brilliant display of ingenious

argument and stirring words. The manner of the speaker lent additional effect to his clever and captivating eloquence. He had a clear, sweet, penetrating voice, a fluency that seemed so easy as to make listeners sometimes fancy that it ought to cost no effort, and a grace of gesture such as it must be owned the courts of law where he had had his training do not often teach. Mr. Cockburn defended the policy of Palmerston with an effect only inferior to that produced by Palmerston's own speech, and with a rhetorical grace and finish to which Palmerston made no pretension. Mr. Cockburn's career was safe from that hour. It is needless to say that he well upheld in after years the reputation he won in a night. The brilliant and sudden success of the member for Southampton was but the fitting prelude to the abiding distinction won by the Lord Chief Justice of England.

One association of profound melancholy clings to that great debate. The speech delivered by Sir Robert Peel was the last that was destined to come from his lips. The debate closed on the morning of Saturday, June 29. It was nearly four o'clock when the division was taken, and Peel left the House as the sunlight was already beginning to stream into corridors and lobbies. He went home to rest; but his sleep could not be long. He had to attend a meeting of the Royal Commissioners of the Great Industrial Exhibition at twelve. He returned home for a short time after the meeting, and then set out for a ride in the Park. He called at Buckingham Palace and wrote his name in the Queen's visiting-book. Then as he was riding up Constitution Hill he stopped to talk to a young lady, a friend of his, who was also riding. His horse suddenly shied and flung him off; and Peel clinging to the bridle, the animal fell with its knees on his shoulders. The injuries which he received proved beyond all skill of surgery. He lingered, now conscious, now delirious with pain, for two or three days; and he died about eleven o'clock on the night of July 2. Most of the members of his family and some of his dearest old friends and companions in political arms were beside him when he died. The tears of the Duke of Wellington in one House of Parliament, and the eloquence of Mr. Gladstone in the other, were expressions as fitting and adequate as might be of the universal feeling of the nation.

Peel seemed destined for great things yet when he died. He was but in his sixty-third year; he was some years younger than Lord Palmerston, who may be said without exaggeration

to have just achieved his first great success. Many circumstances were pointing to Peel as likely before long to be summoned again to the leadership in the government of the country. It is superfluous to say that his faculties as Parliamentary orator or statesman were not showing any signs of decay. An English public man is not supposed to show signs of decaying faculties at sixty-two. The shying horse and perhaps the bad ridership settled the question of Peel's career between them.

To the same year belongs the close of another remarkable career. On August 26, 1850, Louis Philippe, lately King of the French, died at Claremont, the guest of England. Few men in history had gone through greater reverses. He had been soldier, exile, college teacher, wanderer among American-Indian tribes, resident of Philadelphia, and of Bloomingdale in the New York suburbs, and King of the French. He died in exile among us, a clever, unwise, grand, mean old man. There was a great deal about him which made him respected in private life, and when he had nothing to do with state intrigues and the foreign policy of courts. He was much liked in England, where after his sons lived for many years. But there were Englishmen who did not like him and did not readily forgive him. One of these was Lord Palmerston. Louis Philippe always detested Lord Palmerston. Lord Palmerston wrote to his brother a few days after the death of Louis Philippe, expressing his sentiments thereupon with the utmost directness. 'The death of Louis Philippe,' he said, 'delivers me from my most artful and inveterate enemy, whose position gave him in many ways the power to injure me.'

The autumn of 1850 and the greater part of 1851 were disturbed by a sharp and embittered struggle with the Papal court. The movement among some scholarly, mystical men in England towards the Roman Church had made a profound impression in Rome. To the eyes of Papal enthusiasm the whole English nation was only waiting for some word in season to return to the spiritual jurisdiction of Rome. A Papal bull, 'given at St. Peter's, Rome, under the seal of the fisherman,' directed the establishment in England 'of a hierarchy of bishops deriving their titles from their own sees, which we constitute by the present letter in the various apostolic districts.' There always were Catholic bishops in England. There were Catholic archbishops. They were free to go and come, to preach and teach as they liked; to dress as they liked; for all

that nineteen out of every twenty Englishmen cared, they might have been also free to call themselves what they liked. The anger was not against the giving of the new titles, but against the assumption of a new right to give titles representing territorial distinctions in this country; against the Pope's evident assumption that the change he was making was the natural result of an actual change in the national feeling of England. The Pope had divided England into various dioceses, which he placed under the control of an archbishop and twelve suffragans; and the new archbishop was Cardinal Wiseman. Under the title of Archbishop of Westminster and Administrator Apostolic of the Diocese of Southwark, Cardinal Wiseman was now to reside in London. Cardinal Wiseman was already well known in England. He was of English descent on his father's side and of Irish on his mother's; he was a Spaniard by birth, and a Roman by education. His family on both sides was of good position; his father came of a long line of Essex gentry. Wiseman had held the professorship of Oriental languages in the English College at Rome, and afterwards became rector of the college. In 1840 he was appointed by the Pope one of the Vicars Apostolic in England, and held his position here as Bishop of Melipotamus *in partibus infidelium*. He was well known to be a fine scholar, an accomplished linguist, and a powerful preacher and controversialist. But he was believed also to be a man of great ecclesiastical ambition—ambition for his Church, that is to say—of singular boldness, and of much political ability. The Pope's action was set down as in great measure the work of Wiseman. The Cardinal himself was accepted in the minds of most Englishmen as a type of the regular Italian ecclesiastic—bold, clever, ambitious, and unscrupulous. The very fact of his English extraction only militated the more against him in the public feeling. He was regarded as in some sense one who had gone over to the enemy, and who was the more to be dreaded because of the knowledge he carried with him. The first step taken by Cardinal Wiseman did not tend to charm away this feeling. He issued a pastoral letter, addressed to England, on October 7, 1850, which was set forth as 'given out of the Flaminian Gate of Rome.' This description of the letter was afterwards stated to be in accordance with one of the necessary formularies of the Church of Rome; but it was then assumed in England to be an expression of insolence and audacity intended to remind the English people that from out

of Rome itself came the assertion of supremacy over them. This letter was to be read publicly in all the Roman Catholic churches in London. It addressed itself directly to the English people, and it announced that 'your beloved country has received a place among the fair churches which normally constituted form the splendid aggregate of Catholic communion; Catholic England has been restored to its orbit in the ecclesiastical firmament from which its light had long vanished; and begins now anew its course of regularly-adjusted action round the centre of unity, the source of jurisdiction, of light, and of vigour.'

The letter had hardly reached England when the country was aroused by another letter coming from a very different quarter, and intended as a counterblast to the Papal assumption of authority. This was Lord John Russell's famous Durham letter. The letter was in reply to one from the Bishop of Durham, and was dated 'Downing Street, November 4.' Lord John Russell condemned in the most unmeasured terms the assumption of the Pope as 'a pretension of supremacy over the realm of England, and a claim to sole and undivided sway, which is inconsistent with the Queen's supremacy, with the rights of our bishops and clergy, and with the spiritual independence of the nation as asserted even in the Roman Catholic times.' But Lord John Russell went further than all this. He declared that there was a danger that alarmed him more than any aggression from a foreign sovereign, and that was 'the danger within the gates from the unworthy sons of the Church of England herself.' The Catholics looked upon the letter as a declaration of war against Catholicism; the fanatical of the other side welcomed it as a trumpet-call to a new 'No Popery' agitation.

The very day after the letter appeared was the Guy Faux anniversary. All over the country the effigies of the Pope and Cardinal Wiseman took the place of the regulation 'Guy,' and were paraded and burnt amid tumultuous demonstrations. Mr. Disraeli endeavoured at once to foment the prevailing heat of public temper and at the same time to direct its fervour against the Ministry themselves, by declaring in a published letter that he could hardly blame the Pope for supposing himself at liberty to divide England into bishoprics, seeing the encouragement he had got from the ministers themselves by the recognition they had offered to the Roman Catholic hierarchy of Ireland. As a matter of fact it was not the existing

Government that had recognised the rank of the Irish Catholic prelates. The recognition had been formally arranged in January 1845 by a royal warrant or commission for carrying out the Charitable Bequests Act, which gave the Irish Catholic prelates rank immediately after the prelates of the Established Church of the same degree. But the letter of Mr. Disraeli, like that of Lord John Russell, served to inflame passions on both sides, and to put the country in the worst possible mood for any manner of wholesome legislation. Never during the same generation had there been such an outburst of anger on both sides of the religious controversy. It was a curious incident in political history that Lord John Russell, who had more than any Englishman then living been identified with the principles of religious liberty, who had sat at the feet of Fox, and had for his closest friend the Catholic poet Thomas Moore, came to be regarded by Roman Catholics as the bitterest enemy of their creed and their rights of worship.

The opening of Parliament came on February 4, 1851. The Ministry had to do something. No Ministry that ever held power in England could have attempted to meet the House of Commons without some project of a measure to allay the intense excitement which prevailed throughout the country. Two or three days after the meeting of Parliament Lord John Russell introduced his bill to prevent the assumption by Roman Catholics of titles taken from any territory or place within the United Kingdom. The measure proposed to prohibit the use of all such titles under penalty, and to render void all acts done by or bequests made to persons under such titles. The Roman Catholic Relief Act imposed a penalty of one hundred pounds for every assumption of a title taken from an existing see. Lord John Russell proposed now to extend the penalty to the assumption of any title whatever from any place in the United Kingdom. The reception which was given to Lord John Russell's motion for leave to bring in this bill was not encouraging. Usually leave to bring in a bill is granted as a matter of course. Some few general observations of extemporaneous and guarded criticism are often made; but the common practice is to offer no opposition. On this occasion, however, the debate on the motion for leave to bring in the bill was renewed for night after night, and the fullest promise of an angry and prolonged resistance was given. The opponents of the measure had on their side not only all the prominent champions of religious liberty like Sir James

Graham, Mr. Gladstone, Mr. Cobden, and Mr. Bright; but also Protestant politicians of such devotion to the interests of the Church as Mr. Roundell Palmer, afterwards Lord Selborne, and Mr. Beresford Hope; and of course they had with them all the Irish Catholic members. Mr. Roebuck described the bill as 'one of the meanest, pettiest, and most futile measures that ever disgraced even bigotry itself.' Mr. Bright called it 'little, paltry, and miserable—a mere sham to bolster up Church ascendency.' Mr. Disraeli declared that he would not oppose the introduction of the bill; but he spoke of it in language of as much contempt as Mr. Roebuck and Mr. Bright had used, calling it a mere piece of petty persecution. Sir Robert Inglis, on the part of the more extreme Protestants, objected to the bill on the ground that it did not go far enough. Yet so strong was the feeling in favour of some legislation, that when the division was taken, three hundred and ninety-five votes were given for the motion, and only sixty-three against it.

It was interrupted at one stage by events which had nothing to do with its history. The Government got into trouble of another kind. Mr. Locke King, member for East Surrey, asked for leave to bring in a bill to assimilate the county franchise to that existing in boroughs. Lord John Russell opposed the motion, and the Government were defeated by 100 votes against 52. It was evident that this was only what is called a 'snap' vote; that the House was taken by surprise, and that the result in no wise represented the general feeling of Parliament. But still it was a vexatious occurrence for the Ministry. Their budget had already been received with very general marks of dissatisfaction. The Chancellor of the Exchequer only proposed a partial and qualified repeal of the window tax, an impost which was justly detested, and he continued the income tax. Under these circumstances Lord John Russell felt that he had no alternative but to tender his resignation to the Queen. Leaving his Ecclesiastical Titles Bill suspended in air, he announced that he could no longer think of carrying on the government of the country.

The question was who should succeed him. The Queen sent for Lord Stanley, afterwards Lord Derby. Lord Stanley offered to do his best to form a Government, but he tried without hope, and of course he was unsuccessful. The position of parties was very peculiar. It was impossible to form any combination which could really agree upon anything. There were three parties out of which a Ministry might be formed.

These were the Whigs, the Conservatives, and the Peelites. The Peelites were a very rising and promising body of men. Among them were Sir James Graham, Lord Canning, Mr. Gladstone, Mr. Sidney Herbert, Mr. Cardwell, and some others almost equally well known. Only these three groups were fairly in the competition for office; for the idea of a Ministry of Radicals and Manchester men was not then likely to present itself to any official mind. But how could anyone put together a Ministry formed from a combination of these three? The Peelites would not coalesce with the Tories because of the Protection question, and because of Lord Stanley's own declaration that he still regarded the policy of Free Trade as only an experiment. The Peelites would not combine with the Whigs because of the Ecclesiastical Titles Bill. The Conservatives would not disavow protective ideas; the Whigs would not give up the Ecclesiastical Titles Bill. No statesman, therefore, could form a Government without having to count on two great parties being against him on one question or the other. There was nothing better to be done than to ask the ministers who had resigned to resume their places and muddle on as they best could. It is not enough to say that there was nothing better to be done: there was nothing else to be done. They were at all events still administering the affairs of the country, and no one would relieve them of the task. So the ministers returned to their places and resumed the Ecclesiastical Titles Bill.

The Government at first, as we have seen, resolved to impose a penalty on the assumption of ecclesiastical titles by Roman Catholic prelates from places in the United Kingdom, and to make null and void all acts done or bequests made in virtue of such titles. But they found that it would be absolutely impossible to apply such legislation in Ireland. In that country a Catholic hierarchy had long been tolerated, and all the functions of a regular hierarchy had been in full and formal operation. To apply the new measure to Ireland would have been virtually to repeal the Roman Catholic Relief Act and restore the penal laws. On the other hand, the ministers were not willing to make one law against titles for England and another for Ireland. They were driven, therefore, to the course of withdrawing two of the stringent clauses of the bill, and leaving it little more than a mere declaration against the assumption of unlawful titles. But by doing this they furnished stronger reasons for opposition to both of the two

very different parties who had hitherto denounced their way of dealing with the crisis. Those who thought the bill did not go far enough before were of course indignant at the proposal to shear it of whatever little force it had originally possessed. They, on the other hand, who had opposed it as a breach of the principle of religious liberty could now ridicule it with all the greater effect on the ground that it violated a principle without even the pretext of doing any practical good as a compensation.

The debates were long, fierce, and often passionate. The bill was wrangled over until the end of June, and then a large number, some seventy, of the Irish Catholic members publicly seceded from the discussion and announced that they would take no further part in the divisions. On this some of the strongest opponents of the Papal aggression, led by Sir Frederick Thesiger, afterwards Lord Chelmsford, brought in and carried a series of resolutions intended to make the bill more stringent than it had been even as originally introduced. The object of the resolutions was principally to give the power of prosecuting and claiming a penalty to anybody, provided he obtained the consent of the law officers of the Crown, and to make penal the introduction of bulls. When the measure came on for a third reading, Lord John Russell moved the omission of the added clauses, but he was defeated by large majorities. The bill was done with so far as the House of Commons was concerned. After an eloquent and powerful protest from Mr. Gladstone against the measure, as one disparaging to the great principle of religious freedom, the bill was read a third time. It went up to the House of Lords, was passed there without alteration although not without opposition, and soon after received the Royal assent.

This was practically the last the world heard about it. In the Roman Church everything went on as before. The new Cardinal Archbishop still called himself Archbishop of Westminster; some of the Irish prelates made a point of ostentatiously using their territorial titles in letters addressed to the ministers themselves. The bitterness of feeling which the Papal aggression and the legislation against it had called up did not indeed pass away very soon. It broke out again and again, sometimes in the form of very serious riot. But England was not restored to the communion of the Roman Catholic Church. On the other hand, the Ecclesiastical Titles Act was never put in force. Nobody troubled about it. Many

years after, in 1871, it was quietly repealed. It died in such obscurity that the outer public hardly knew whether it was above ground or below.

The first of May, 1851, will always be memorable as the day on which the Great Exhibition was opened in Hyde Park. Golden indeed were the expectations with which hopeful people welcomed that historic Exhibition. It was the first organised to gather all the representatives of the world's industry into one great fair; and there were those who seriously expected that men who had once been prevailed upon to meet together in friendly and peaceful rivalry would never again be persuaded to meet in rivalry of a fiercer kind. The Hyde Park Exhibition was often described as the festival to open the long reign of Peace. It might as a mere matter of chronology be called without any impropriety the festival to celebrate the close of the short reign of Peace. From that year, 1851, it may be said fairly enough that the world has hardly known a week of peace. The *coup d'état* in France closed the year. The Crimean War began almost immediately after and was followed by the Indian Mutiny, and that by the war between France and Austria, the long civil war in the United States, the Neapolitan enterprises of Garibaldi, and the Mexican intervention, until we come to the war between Austria, Prussia, and Denmark; the short sharp struggle for German supremacy between Austria and Prussia, the war between France and Germany, the war between Russia and Turkey, and our own various Asiatic and African wars. Such were, in brief summary, the events that quickly followed the great inaugurating Festival of Peace in 1851.

The first idea of the Exhibition was conceived by Prince Albert; and it was his energy and influence which succeeded in carrying the idea into practical execution. Prince Albert was President of the Society of Arts, and this position secured him a platform for the effective promulgation of his ideas. On June 30, 1849, he called a meeting of the Society of Arts at Buckingham Palace. He proposed that the Society should undertake the initiative in the promotion of an exhibition of the works of all nations. The idea was at once taken up by the Society of Arts, and by their agency spread abroad. In the first few days of 1850 a formal Commission was appointed 'for the promotion of the Exhibition of the Works of All Nations, to be holden in the year 1851.' Prince Albert was appointed President of the Commission.

On March 21 in the same year the Lord Mayor of London gave a banquet at the Mansion House to the chief magistrates of the cities, towns, and boroughs of the United Kingdom, for the purpose of inviting their co-operation in support of the undertaking. Prince Albert was present and spoke. He had cultivated the art of speaking with much success, and had almost entirely overcome whatever difficulty stood in his way from his foreign birth and education. He never quite lost his foreign accent. But his style of speaking was clear, thoughtful, stately, and sometimes even noble. It exactly suited its purpose. It was that of a man who did not set up for an orator; and who, when he spoke, wished that his ideas rather than his words should impress his hearers. At the dinner in the Mansion House he spoke with great clearness and grace of the purposes of the Great Exhibition. It was, he said, to 'give the world a true test, a living picture, of the point of industrial development at which the whole of mankind has arrived, and a new starting-point from which all nations will be able to direct their further exertions.'

It must not be supposed, however, that the project of the Great Exhibition advanced wholly without opposition. Many persons were disposed to sneer at it altogether; many were sceptical about its doing any particular good; not a few still regarded Prince Albert as a foreigner and a pedant, and were exceedingly slow to believe that anything really practical was likely to be devoloped under his impulse and protection. After some consideration the Royal Commissioners had fixed upon Hyde Park as the best site for the great building, and many energetic and some influential voices were raised in fierce outcry against what was called the profanation of the park. It was argued that the public use of Hyde Park would be destroyed by the Exhibition; that the Park would be utterly spoiled; that its beauty could never be restored. A petition was presented by Lord Campbell to the House of Lords against the occupation of any part of Hyde Park with the Exhibition building. Lord Brougham supported the petition with his characteristic impetuosity and vehemence, and denounced the House of Lords for what he considered its servile deference to royalty in the matter of the Exhibition and its site. It is probably true enough that only the influence of a prince could have carried the scheme to success against the storms of opposition that began to blow at various periods and from different points. Many times during its progress the Prince himself trembled

for the success of his scheme. Many a time he must have felt inclined to renounce it, or at least to regret that he had ever taken it up.

Absurd as the opposition to the scheme may now seem, it is certain that a great many sensible persons thought the moment singularly inopportune for the gathering of large crowds, and were satisfied that some inconvenient, if not dangerous, public demonstrations must be provoked. The smouldering embers of Chartism, they said, were everywhere under society's feet. The crowds of foreigners would, some people said, naturally include large numbers of the 'Reds' of all Continental nations, who would be only too glad to coalesce with Chartism and discontent of all kinds, for the purpose of disturbing the peace of London. The agitation caused by the Papal aggression was still in full force and flame. Most of the Continental sovereigns looked coldly on the undertaking. The King of Prussia took such alarm at the thought of the Red Republicans whom the Exhibition would draw together, that at first he positively prohibited his brother, then Prince of Prussia, now German Emperor, from attending the opening ceremonial; and though he afterwards withdrew the prohibition, he remained full of doubts and fears as to the personal safety of any royal or princely personage found in Hyde Park on the opening day. The Duke of Cambridge being appealed to on the subject, acknowledged himself also full of apprehensions. The objections to the site continued to grow up to a certain time, but public opinion gradually underwent a change, and the opposition to the site was defeated in the House of Commons by a large majority.

Even, however, when the question of the site had been disposed of, there remained immense difficulties in the way. The press was not on the whole very favourable to the project. As the time for the opening drew near, some of the foreign diplomatists in London began to sulk at the whole project. There were small points of objection made about the position and functions of foreign ambassadors at the opening ceremonial, and up to the last moment it was not quite certain whether an absurd diplomatic quarrel might not have been part of the inaugural ceremonies of the opening day.

The Prince did not despair, however, and the project went on. There was a great deal of difficulty in selecting a plan for the building. Huge structures of brickwork, looking like enormous railway sheds, costly and hideous at once, were

proposed; it seemed almost certain that some one of them must be chosen. Happily, a sudden inspiration struck Mr. (afterwards Sir Joseph) Paxton. Why not try glass and iron? he asked himself. Why not build a palace of glass and iron large enough to cover all the intended contents of the Exhibition, and which should be at once light, beautiful, and cheap? Mr. Paxton sketched out his plan hastily; the idea was eagerly accepted by the Royal Commissioners, and the palace of glass and iron arose within the specified time on the green turf of Hyde Park. The idea so happily hit upon was serviceable in more ways than one to the success of the Exhibition. It made the building itself as much an object of curiosity and wonder as the collections under its crystal roof. Of the hundreds of thousands who came to the Exhibition a goodly proportion were drawn to Hyde Park rather by a wish to see Paxton's palace of glass than all the wonders of industrial and plastic art that it enclosed.

The success of the opening day was indeed undoubted. There were nearly thirty thousand people gathered together within the building, and nearly three-quarters of a million of persons lined the way between the Exhibition and Buckingham Palace; and yet no accident whatever occurred, nor had the police any trouble imposed on them by the conduct of anybody in the crowd. It is needless to say that there were no hostile demonstrations by Red Republicans or malignant Chartists or infuriated Irish Catholics. The one thing which especially struck foreign observers, and to which many eloquent pens and tongues bore witness, was the orderly conduct of the people. Nor did the subsequent history of the Exhibition in any way belie the promise of its opening day. It continued to attract delighted crowds to the last, and more than once held within its precincts at one moment nearly a hundred thousand persons, a concourse large enough to have made the population of a respectable Continental capital. The Hyde Park enterprise bequeathed nothing very tangible or distinct to the world, except indeed the palace which, built out of its fabric, not its ruins, so gracefully ornaments one of the soft hills of Sydenham. But in a year made memorable by many political events of the greatest importance, of disturbed and tempestuous politics abroad and at home, of the deaths of many illustrious men, and the failure of many splendid hopes, the Exhibition in Hyde Park still holds its place in memory —not for what it brought or accomplished, but simply for itself, its surroundings, and its house of glass.

CHAPTER X.

PALMERSTON.

THE death of Sir Robert Peel had left Lord Palmerston the most prominent, if not actually the most influential, among the statesmen of England. Palmerston's was a strenuous self-asserting character. He had given himself up to the study of foreign affairs as no minister of his time had done. He had a peculiar capacity for understanding foreign politics and people as well as foreign languages; and he had come somewhat to pique himself upon his knowledge. His sympathies were markedly liberal. In all the popular movements going on throughout the Continent Palmerston's sympathies were generally with the peoples and against the Governments; while he had, on the other hand, a very strong contempt, which he took no pains to conceal, even for the very best class of the Continental demagogue. Palmerston seized a conclusion at once, and hardly ever departed from it. He never seemed to care who knew what he thought on any subject. He had a contempt for men of more deliberate temper, and often spoke and wrote as if he thought a man slow in forming an opinion must needs be a dull man, not to say a fool. All opinions not his own he held in good-humoured scorn. In some of his letters we find him writing of men of the most undoubted genius and wisdom, whose views have since stood all the test of time and trial, as if they were mere blockheads for whom no practical man could feel the slightest respect. It would be almost superfluous to say, in describing a man of such a nature, that Lord Palmerston sometimes fancied he saw great wisdom and force of character in men for whom neither then nor since did the world in general show much regard. As with a man, so with a cause, Lord Palmerston was to all appearance capricious in his sympathies. Calmer and more earnest minds were sometimes offended at what seemed a lack of deep-seated principle in his mind and his policy, even when it happened that he and they were in accord as to the course that ought to be pursued. His levity often shocked them; his blunt, brusque ways of speaking and writing sometimes gave downright offence.

Lord Palmerston was unsparing in his lectures to foreign states. He was always admonishing them that they ought to

lose no time in at once adopting the principles of government which prevailed in England. While therefore he was a Conservative in home politics, and never even professed the slightest personal interest in any projects of political reform in England, he got the credit all over the Continent of being a supporter, promoter, and patron of all manner of revolutionary movements, and a disturber of the relations between subjects and their sovereigns. Palmerston, therefore, had many enemies among European statesmen. It is now certain that the Queen frequently winced under the expressions of ill-feeling which were brought to her ears as affecting England, and, as she supposed, herself, and which she believed to have been drawn on her by the inconsiderate and impulsive conduct of Palmerston. The Prince Consort, on whose advice the Queen very naturally relied, was a man of singularly calm and earnest nature. He liked to form his opinions deliberately and slowly, and disliked expressing any opinion until his mind was well made up. Lord Palmerston, when Secretary for Foreign Affairs, was much in the habit of writing and answering despatches on the spur of the moment, and without consulting either the Queen or his colleagues. Palmerston complained of the long delays which took place on several occasions when, in matters of urgent importance, he waited to submit despatches to the Queen before sending them off. He contended too that where the general policy of state was clearly marked out and well known, it would have been idle to insist that a Foreign Secretary capable of performing the duties of his office should wait to submit for the inspection and approval of the Sovereign and his colleagues every scrap of paper he wrote on before it was allowed to leave England. But the Queen complained that on matters concerning the actual policy of the State Palmerston was in the habit of acting on his own independent judgment and authority; that she found herself more than once thus pledged to a course of policy which she had not had an opportunity of considering, and would not have approved if she had had such an opportunity; and that she hardly ever found any question absolutely intact and uncompromised when it was submitted to her judgment.

The Queen and the Prince had long chafed under Lord Palmerston's cavalier way of doing business. So far back as 1849 her Majesty had felt obliged to draw the attention of the Foreign Secretary to the fact that his office was constitutionally

under the control of the Prime Minister, and the despatches to be submitted for her approval should, therefore, pass through the hands of Lord John Russell. Lord John Russell approved of this arrangement, only suggesting—and the suggestion is of some moment in considering Lord Palmerston's defence of his conduct afterwards—that every facility should be given for the transaction of business by the Queen's attending to the draft despatches as soon as possible after their arrival. The Queen accepted the suggestion good-humouredly, only pleading that she should 'not be pressed for an answer within a few minutes, as is done now sometimes.' One can see a part of the difficulty at least even from these slight hints. Lord Palmerston was rapid in forming his judgments as in all his proceedings, and when once he had made up his mind was impatient of any delay which seemed to him superfluous. Prince Albert was slow, deliberate, reflective, and methodical. Lord Palmerston was always sure he was right in every judgment he formed, even if it were adopted on the spur of the moment; Prince Albert loved reconsideration and was open to new argument and late conviction. However, the difficulty was got over in 1849. Lord Palmerston agreed to every suggestion, and for the time all seemed likely to go smoothly. It was only for the time. The Queen soon believed she had reason to complain that the new arrangement was not carried out. Things were going on, she thought, in just the old way. Lord Palmerston dealt as before with foreign courts according to what seemed best to him at the moment; and his Sovereign and his colleagues often only knew of some important despatch or instruction when the thing was done and could not be conveniently or becomingly undone. The Prince, at her Majesty's request, wrote to Lord John Russell, complaining strongly of the conduct of Lord Palmerston. An important memorandum was addressed by her Majesty to the Prime Minister, laying down in clear and severe language the exact rules by which the Foreign Secretary must be bound in his dealings with her. The memorandum was a severe and a galling rebuke for the Foreign Secretary. We can imagine with what emotions Lord Palmerston must have received it. He was a proud, self-confident man; and it came on him just in the moment of his Pacifico triumph. But he kept down his feelings. It is impossible not to feel a high respect for the manner in which Lord Palmerston acted. He took his rebuke in the most perfect good temper. He wrote

a friendly and good-humoured letter to Lord John Russell, saying, 'I have taken a copy of this memorandum of the Queen, and will not fail to attend to the directions which it contains.' Lord Palmerston went a step farther in the way of conciliation. He asked for an interview with Prince Albert, and he explained to the Prince in the most emphatic and indignant terms that the accusation against him of being purposely wanting in respect to the Sovereign was absolutely unfounded. But he does not seem in the course of the interview to have done much more than argue the point as to the propriety and convenience of the system he had lately been adopting in the business of the Foreign Office. So for the hour the matter dropped. But it was destined to come up again in more serious form than before.

About this time the Hungarians had been making a desperate attempt to throw off the domination of Austria and assert their independence. The struggle had begun over some questions of constitutional rights involved in the connection between Hungary and Austria, but it grew into a regular rebellion, having for its aim the complete freedom of Hungary. For a time it carried all before it, but it was finally crushed by the intervention of Russia. This intervention of Russia called up a wide and deep feeling of regret and indignation in this country. Louis Kossuth, who had been dictator of Hungary during the greater part of the insurrection, and who represented, in the English mind at least, the cause of Hungary and her national independence, came to England, and the English public welcomed him with especial cordiality. There was much in Kossuth himself as well as in his cause to attract the enthusiasm of popular assemblages. He had a strikingly handsome face and a stately presence. He was picturesque and perhaps even theatric in his dress and his bearing. He looked like a picture; all his attitudes and gestures seemed as if they were meant to be reproduced by a painter. He was undoubtedly one of the most eloquent men who ever addressed an English popular audience. In one of his imprisonments Kossuth had studied the English language chiefly from the pages of Shakespeare. The English he spoke was the noblest in its style from which a student could supply his eloquence: Kossuth spoke the English of Shakespeare. Through all his speeches there ran the thread of one distinct principle of international policy to which Kossuth endeavoured to obtain the assent of the English people. This was the principle that if one State

intervenes in the domestic affairs of another for the purpose of putting down revolution, it then becomes the right, and may even be the duty, of any third State to throw in the weight of her sword against the unjustifiable intervention. As a principle this is nothing more than some of the ablest and most thoughtful Englishmen had advocated before and have advocated since. But in Kossuth's mind, and in the understanding of those who heard him, it meant that England ought to declare war against Russia or Austria, or both ; the former for having intervened between the Emperor of Austria and the Hungarians, and the latter for having invited and profited by the intervention.

The presence of Kossuth and the reception he got excited a wild anger and alarm among Austrian statesmen. The Austrian Ambassador in England was all sensitiveness and remonstrance. The relations between this country and Austria seemed to become every day more and more strained. Lord Palmerston regarded the anger and the fears of Austria with a contempt which he took no pains to conceal. Lord Palmerston knew that the English public never had any serious notion of going to war with Austria in obedience to Kossuth's appeal. There came a time when Kossuth lived in England forgotten and unnoticed ; when his passing away from England was unobserved as his presence there long had been. The English crowds who applauded Kossuth at first meant nothing more than general sympathy with any hero of Continental revolution, and personal admiration for the eloquence of the man who addressed them. But Kossuth did not thus accept the homage paid to him. No foreigner could have understood it in his place. Lord Palmerston understood it thoroughly, and knew what it meant, and how long it would last.

Some of Lord Palmerston's colleagues, however, became greatly alarmed when it was reported that the Foreign Minister was about to receive a visit from Kossuth in person to thank him for the sympathy and protection which England had accorded to the Hungarian refugees while they were still in Turkey, and without which it is only too likely that they would have been handed over to Austria or Russia. If Kossuth were received by Lord Palmerston, the Austrian ambassador, it was confidently reported, would leave England. Lord John Russell took alarm, and called a meeting of the Cabinet to consider the momentous question. Lord Palmerston reluctantly consented to appease the alarms of his

colleagues by promising to avoid an interview with Kossuth. The hoped-for result, that of sparing the sensibilities of the Austrian Government, was not attained. In fact, things turned out a great deal worse than they might have done if the interview between Lord Palmerston and Kossuth had been quietly allowed to come off. Meetings were held to express sympathy with Kossuth, and addresses were voted to Lord Palmerston thanking him for the influence he had exerted in preventing the surrender of Kossuth to Austria. Lord Palmerston consented to receive these addresses from the hands of deputations at the Foreign Office. The whole proceeding considerably alarmed some of Lord Palmerston's colleagues, and was regarded with distinct displeasure by the Queen and Prince Albert. But the possible indiscretion of Lord Palmerston's dealings with a deputation or two from Finsbury and Islington became a matter of little interest when the country was called upon to consider the propriety of the Foreign Secretary's dealings with the new ruler of a new state system, with the author of the *coup d'état*.

Things had been going rather strangely in France. After the fall of Louis Philippe a republic had been set up, and it had received the support of a young man whom we last saw playing the part of special constable against the Chartists, the Prince Louis Napoleon. Louis Napoleon was a nephew of the great Emperor. He had made attempts to get on the throne of France before, and been imprisoned and escaped, and taken refuge in England. Louis Napoleon had lived many years in England. He was as well known there as any prominent member of the English aristocracy. He went a good deal into very various society, literary, artistic, merely fashionable, purely rowdy, as well as into that political society which might have seemed natural to him. In all circles the same opinion appears to have been formed of him. From the astute Lord Palmerston to the most ignorant of the horse-jockeys with whom he occasionally consorted, all who met him seemed to think of the Prince in much the same way. It was agreed on all hands that he was a fatuous, dreamy, moony, impracticable, stupid young man. A sort of stolid amiability, not enlightened enough to keep him out of low company and questionable conduct, appeared to be his principal characteristic. He constantly talked of his expected accession somehow and some time to the throne of France, and people only smiled pityingly at him. When the republic was fairly established he went over to

France, gave it his support, and succeeded in being elected its president. Then he plotted to overthrow it. He won the army to his side. On the second of December, 1851, he seized and imprisoned all his political opponents; the next day he bore down with the most savage violence all possible opposition. Paris was in the hands of his soldiers; hundreds of helpless people were slaughtered, the streets of Paris ran with blood; Louis Napoleon proclaimed himself Prince President. This was the *coup d'état.*

The news of the *coup d'état* took England by surprise. A shock went through the whole country. The almost universal voice of popular opinion condemned it as strongly as nearly all men of genuine enlightenment and feeling condemned it then and since. The Queen was particularly anxious that nothing should be said by the British ambassador to commit us to any approval of what had been done. On December 4 the Queen wrote to Lord John Russell from Osborne, expressing her desire that Lord Normanby, our ambassador at Paris, should be instructed to remain entirely passive, and say no word that might be misconstrued into approval of the action of the Prince President. Lord Normanby's reply to this despatch created a startling sensation. Our ambassador wrote to say that when he called on the French Minister for Foreign Affairs to inform him that he had been instructed by her Majesty's Government not to make any change in his relations with the French Government, the Minister, M. Turgot, told him that he had heard two days before from Count Walewski, the French ambassador in London, that Lord Palmerston had expressed to him his entire approval of what Louis Napoleon had done, and his conviction that the Prince President could not have acted otherwise. It would not be easy to exaggerate the sensation produced among Lord Palmerston's colleagues by this astounding piece of news. The Queen wrote at once to Lord John Russell, asking him if he knew anything about the approval which 'the French Government pretend to have received;' declaring that she could not 'believe in the truth of the assertion, as such an approval given by Lord Palmerston would have been in complete contradiction to the line of strict neutrality and passiveness which the Queen had expressed her desire to see followed with regard to the late convulsions at Paris.' Lord John Russell replied that he had written to Lord Palmerston, 'saying that he presumed there was no truth in the report.' The reply of Lord Palmerston left no doubt that

Lord Palmerston had expressed to Count Walewski his approval of the *coup d'état.*

Lord Palmerston endeavoured to draw a distinction between the expressions of a Foreign Secretary in conversation with an ambassador, and a formal declaration of opinion. But it is clear that the French ambassador did not understand Lord Palmerston to be merely indulging in the irresponsible gossip of private life, and that Lord Palmerston never said a word to impress him with the belief that their conversation had that colourless and unmeaning character. In any case it was surely a piece of singular indiscretion on the part of a Foreign Minister to give the French ambassador, even in private conversation, an unqualified opinion in favour of a stroke of policy of which the British Government as a whole, and indeed with the one exception of Lord Palmerston, entirely disapproved. Lord John Russell made up his mind. He came to the conclusion that he could no longer go on with Lord Palmerston as a colleague in the Foreign Office. The quarrel was complete; Lord Palmerston ceased from that time to be Foreign Secretary, and his place was taken by Lord Granville. Seldom has a greater sensation been produced by the removal of a minister. The effect which was created all over Europe was probably just what Lord Palmerston would have desired; the belief prevailed everywhere that he had been sacrificed to the monarchical and reactionary influences all over the Continent. The statesmen of Europe were under the impression that Lord Palmerston was put out of office as an evidence that England was about to withdraw from her former attitude of sympathy with the popular movements of the Continent.

The meeting of Parliament took place on February 3 following, 1852. It would be superfluous to say the keenest anxiety was felt to know the full reason of the sudden dismissal. The House of Commons was not long left to wait for an explanation. Lord John Russell made a long speech, in which he went into the whole history of the differences between Lord Palmerston and his colleagues; and, what was more surprising to the House, into a history of the late Foreign Secretary's differences with his Sovereign, and the threat of dismissal which had so long been hanging over his head. The Prime Minister read to the House the Queen's memorandum. Lord John Russell's speech was a great success. Lord Palmerston's was, even in the estimation of his closest friends, a failure. Palmerston seemed to have prac-

tically no defence. He only went over again the points put by him in the correspondence already noticed; contended that on the whole he had judged rightly of the French crisis, and that he could not help forming an opinion on it, and so forth. Of the Queen's memorandum he said nothing. He made up his mind that a dispute between a sovereign and a subject would be unbecoming of both; and he passed over the memorandum in deliberate silence. The almost universal opinion of the House of Commons and of the clubs was that Lord Palmerston's career was closed. 'Palmerston is smashed!' was the common saying of the clubs. A night or two after the debate Lord Dalling met Mr. Disraeli on the staircase of the Russian Embassy, and Disraeli remarked to him that 'there was a Palmerston.' Lord Palmerston evidently did not think so. The letters he wrote to friends immediately after his fall show him as jaunty and full of confidence as ever. He was quite satisfied with the way things had gone. He waited calmly for what he called, a few days afterwards, 'My tit-for-tat with John Russell,' which came about indeed sooner than even he himself could well have expected.

All through the year 1852 the national mind of England was disturbed. The country was stirring itself in quite an unusual manner, in order that it might be ready for a possible and even an anticipated invasion from France. The Volunteer movement sprang into sudden existence. All over the country corps of young volunteers were being formed. An immense amount of national enthusiasm accompanied and acclaimed the formation of the volunteer army, which received the sanction of the Crown early in the year, and thus became a national institution. The meaning of all this movement was explained by the steady progress of the Prince President of France to an imperial throne. The previous year had closed upon his *coup d'état*. He had arrested, imprisoned, banished, or shot his principal enemies, and had demanded from the French people a Presidency for ten years, a Ministry responsible to the executive power—himself alone—and two political Chambers to be elected by universal suffrage. Nearly five hundred prisoners, untried before any tribunal, even that of a drum-head, had been shipped off to Cayenne. The streets of Paris had been soaked in blood. The President instituted a *plébiscite*, or vote of the whole people, and of course he got all he asked for. There was no arguing with the commander

of twenty legions, and of such legions as those that had operated with terrible efficiency on the Boulevards. The Bonapartist Empire was restored. The President became Emperor, and Prince Louis Napoleon was Napoleon the Third.

It would have been impossible that the English people could view all this without emotion and alarm. They could not see with indifference the rise of a new Napoleon to power. The one special characteristic of the Napoleonic principle was its hostility to England. The life of the great Napoleon in its greatest days had been devoted to the one purpose of humiliating England. His plans had been foiled by England. He owed his fall principally to England. He died a prisoner of England, and with his hatred of her embittered rather than appeased. It did not seem possible that a new Emperor Napoleon could arise without bringing a restoration of that hatred along with him. An invasion of England was not a likely event. But it was not by any means an impossible event. The more composedly one looks back to it now, the more he will be compelled to admit that it was at least on the cards. The feeling of national uneasiness and alarm was not a mere panic. There were five projects with which public opinion all over Europe specially credited Louis Napoleon when he began his imperial reign. One was a war with Russia. Another was a war with Austria. A third was a war with Prussia. A fourth was the annexation of Belgium. The fifth was the invasion of England. Three of these projects were carried out. The fourth we know was in contemplation. Our combination with France in the first project probably put all serious thought of the fifth out of the head of the French Emperor. He got far more prestige out of an alliance with us than he could ever have got out of any quarrel with us; and he had little or no risk. But we need not look upon the mood of England in 1852 as one of idle and baseless panic. The same feeling broke into life again in 1859, when the Emperor of the French suddenly announced his determination to go to war with Austria. It was in this latter period indeed that the Volunteer movement became a great national organisation. But in 1852 the beginning of an army of volunteers was made; and what is of more importance to the immediate business of our history, the Government determined to bring in a bill for the reorganisation of the national militia.

Our militia was not in any case a body to be particularly proud of at that time. It had fallen into decay, and almost

into disorganisation. Nothing could have been a more proper work for any Government than its restoration to efficiency and respectability. We had on our hands at the time one of our little wars—a Caffre war, which was protracted to a vexatious length, and which was not without serious military difficulty. It began in the December of 1850, and was not completely disposed of before the early part of 1853. We could not afford to have our defences in any defective condition. But it was an unfortunate characteristic of Lord John Russell's Government that it attempted so much legislation, not because some particular scheme commended itself to the mature wisdom of the Ministry, but because something had to be done in a hurry to satisfy public opinion; and the Government could not think of anything better at the moment than the first scheme that came to hand. Lord John Russell accordingly introduced a Militia Bill, which was in the highest degree inadequate and unsatisfactory. The principal peculiarity of it was that it proposed to substitute a local militia for the regular force that had been in existence. Lord Palmerston saw great objections to this alteration, and urged them with much briskness and skill on the night when Lord John Russell explained his measure. When Palmerston began his speech, he probably intended to be merely critical as regarded points in the measure which were susceptible of amendment; but as he went on he found more and more that he had the House with him. Every objection he made, every criticism he urged, almost every sentence he spoke, drew down increasing cheers. Lord Palmerston saw that the House was not only thoroughly with him on this ground, but thoroughly against the Government on various grounds. A few nights after he followed up his first success by proposing a resolution to substitute the word 'regular' for the word 'local' in the bill; thus, in fact, to reconstruct the bill on an entirely different principle from that adopted by its framer. The effort was successful. The Peelites went with Palmerston; the Protectionists followed him as well; and the result was that 136 votes were given for the amendment, and only 125 against it. The Government were defeated by a majority of eleven. Lord John Russell instantly announced that he could no longer continue in office, as he did not possess the confidence of the country. The announcement took the House by surprise. Palmerston did not expect any such result, he declared; but the revenge was doubtless sweet for all that. This was in February

1852; and it was only in the December of the previous year that Lord Palmerston was compelled to leave the Foreign Office by Lord John Russell.

The Russell Ministry had done little and initiated less. It had carried on Peel's system by throwing open the markets to foreign as well as colonial sugar, and by the repeal of the Navigation Laws enabled merchants to employ foreign ships and seamen in the conveyance of their goods. It had made a mild and ineffectual effort at a Reform Bill, and had feebly favoured attempts to admit Jews to Parliament. It sank from power with an unexpected collapse in which the nation felt small concern. Lord Palmerston did not come to power again at that moment. He might have gone in with Lord Derby if he had been so inclined. But Lord Derby, who, it may be said, had succeeded to that title on the death of his father in the preceding year, still talked of testing the policy of Free Trade at a general election, and of course Palmerston was not disposed to have anything to do with such a proposition. Lord Derby tried various combinations in vain, and at last had to experiment with a Cabinet of undiluted Protectionists. He had to take office, not because he wanted it, or because anyone in particular wanted him; but simply and solely because there was no one else who could undertake the task. The Ministry which Lord Derby was able to form was not a strong one. Lord Palmerston described it as containing two men of mark, Derby and Disraeli, and a number of ciphers. It had not, except for these two, a single man of any political ability, and had hardly one of any political experience. It had an able lawyer for Lord Chancellor, Lord St. Leonards, but he was nothing of a politician. The rest of the members of the Government were respectable country gentlemen. The head of the Government was remarkable for his dashing blunders as a politician quite as much as for his dashing eloquence.

Concerning Mr. Disraeli himself it is not too much to say that many of his own party were rather more afraid of his genius than of the dulness of any of his colleagues. It is not a pleasant task in the best of circumstances to be at the head of a tolerated Ministry in the House of Commons: a Ministry which is in a minority, and only holds its place because there is no one ready to relieve it of the responsibility of office. Rarely indeed is the leadership of the House of Commons undertaken by anyone who has not previously held

office; and Mr. Disraeli entered upon leadership and office at the same moment for the first time. He became Chancellor of the Exchequer and leader of the House of Commons. Among the many gifts with which he was accredited by fame, not a single admirer had hitherto dreamed of including a capacity for the mastery of figures. In addition to all the ordinary difficulties of the Ministry of a minority there was, in this instance, the difficulty arising from the obscurity and inexperience of nearly all its members. Facetious persons dubbed the new Administration the 'Who? Who? Ministry.' The explanation of this odd nickname was found in a story then in circulation about the Duke of Wellington. The Duke, it was said, was anxious to hear from Lord Derby at the earliest moment all about the composition of his Cabinet. He was overheard asking the new Prime Minister in the House of Lords the names of his intended colleagues. The Duke was rather deaf, and, like most deaf persons, spoke in very loud tones, and of course had to be answered in tones also rather elevated. That which was meant for a whispered conversation became audible to the whole House. As Lord Derby mentioned each name, the Duke asked in wonder and eagerness, 'Who? Who?' After each new name came the same inquiry. The Duke of Wellington had clearly never heard of most of the new Ministers before. The story went about; and Lord Derby's Government was familiarly known as the 'Who? Who? Ministry.'

Lord Derby entered office with the avowed intention of testing the Protection question all over again. But he was no sooner in office than he found that the bare suggestion had immensely increased his difficulties. The Free Traders began to stand together again the moment Lord Derby gave his unlucky hint. Every week that passed over his head did something to show him the mistake he had made when he hampered himself with any such undertaking as the revival of the Protection question. Any chance the Government might otherwise have had of making effective head against their very trying difficulties was completely cut away from them. The Free Trade League was reorganised. A conference of Liberal members of the House of Commons was held at the residence of Lord John Russell in Chesham Place, at which it was resolved to extract or extort from the Government a full avowal of their policy with regard to Protection and Free Trade. The feat would have been rather difficult of

accomplishment, seeing that the Government had absolutely no policy to offer on the subject, and were only hoping to be able to consult the country as one might consult an oracle. The Chancellor of the Exchequer, when he made his financial statement, accepted the increased prosperity of the few years preceding with an unction which showed that he at least had no particular notion of attempting to reverse the policy which had so greatly contributed to its progress. Mr. Disraeli pleased the Peelites and the Liberals much more by his statement than he pleased his chief or many of his followers. His speech indeed was very skilful. People were glad that one who had proved himself so clever with many things should have shown himself equal to the uncongenial and unwonted task of dealing with dry facts and figures.

Mr. Disraeli merely proposed in his financial statement to leave things as he found them; to continue the income-tax for another year, as a provisional arrangement pending that complete re-examination of the financial affairs of the country to which he intimated that he found himself quite equal at the proper time. No one could suggest any better course; and the new Chancellor came off on the whole with flying colours. The Government on the whole did not do badly during this period of their probation. They introduced and carried a Militia Bill, for which they obtained the cordial support of Lord Palmerston; and they gave a Constitution to New Zealand; and then, in the beginning of July, the Parliament was prorogued and the dissolution took place. The elections were signalised by very serious riots in many parts of the country. In Ireland particularly party passions ran high. The landlords and the police were on one side; the priests and the popular party on the other; and in several places there was some bloodshed. It was not in Ireland, however, a question about Free Trade or Protection. The question which agitated the Irish constituencies was that of Tenant Right in the first instance; and there was also much bitterness of feeling remaining from the discussions on the Ecclesiastical Titles Bill.

From the time of the elections nothing more was heard about Protection or about the possibility of getting a new trial for its principles. Mr. Disraeli not only threw Protection overboard, but boldly declared that no one could have supposed the Ministry had the slightest intention of proposing to bring back the laws that were repealed in 1846. In fact the

time, he declared, had gone by when such exploded politics could even interest the people of this country. The elections did little or nothing for the Government. They gained a little, but they were still to be the Ministry of a minority; a Ministry on sufferance. It was plain to every one that their existence as a Ministry was only a question of days. Speculation was already busy as to their successors; and it was evident that a new Government could only be formed by some sort of coalition between the Whigs and the Peelites.

Among the noteworthy events of the general election was the return of Macaulay to the House of Commons. Edinburgh elected him in a manner particularly complimentary to him and honourable to herself. He had for some years been absent from Parliament. Differences had arisen between him and his constituents, and the result of it was that at the general election of 1847 Macaulay was left third on the poll at Edinburgh. He felt this deeply. He might have easily found some other constituency; but his wounded pride hastened a resolution he had for some time been forming to retire to a life of private literary labour. He therefore remained out of Parliament. In 1852 the movement of Edinburgh towards him was entirely spontaneous. Edinburgh was anxious to atone for the error of which she had been guilty. Macaulay would go no further than to say that if Edinburgh spontaneously elected him, he should deem it a very high honour, but he would not do anything whatever to court favour. He did not want to be elected to Parliament, he said; he was very happy in his retirement. Edinburgh elected him on those terms. He was not long allowed by his health to serve her; but so long as he remained in the House of Commons it was as member for Edinburgh.

On September 14, 1852, the Duke of Wellington died. His end was singularly peaceful. He fell quietly asleep about a quarter-past three in the afternoon in Walmer Castle, and he did not wake any more. He was a very old man—in his eighty-fourth year—and his death had naturally been looked for as an event certain to come soon. Yet when it did come thus naturally and peacefully, it created a profound public emotion. No other man in our time ever held the position in England which the Duke of Wellington had occupied for more than a whole generation. The place he had won for himself was absolutely unique. His great deeds belonged to a past time. He was hardly anything of a statesman; he knew little

and cared less about what may be called statecraft; and as an administrator he had made many mistakes. But the trust which the nation had in him as a counsellor was absolutely unlimited. It never entered into the mind of anyone to suppose that the Duke of Wellington was actuated in any step he took, or advice he gave, by any feeling but a desire for the good of the State. His loyalty to the Sovereign had something antique and touching in it. There was a blending of personal affection with the devotion of a state servant which lent a certain romantic dignity to the demeanour and character of one who otherwise had but little of the poetical or the sentimental in his nature. In the business of politics he had but one prevailing anxiety, and that was that the Queen's Government should be satisfactorily carried on. He gave up again and again his own most cherished convictions, most ingrained prejudices, in order that he might not stand in the way of the Queen's Government and the proper carrying of it on. This simple fidelity, sometimes rather whimsically displayed, stood him often in stead of an exalted statesmanship, and enabled him to extricate the Government and the nation from difficulties in which a political insight far more keen than his might have failed to prove a guide.

It was for this simple and unswerving devotion to the national good that the people of England admired and revered him. He had not what would be called a loveable temperament, and yet the nation loved him. He was cold and brusque in manner, and seemed in general to have hardly a gleam of the emotional in him. This was not because he lacked affections. On the contrary, his affections and his friendships were warm and enduring; and even in public he had more than once given way to outbursts of emotion such as a stranger would never have expected from one of that cold and rigid demeanour. When Sir Robert Peel died, Wellington spoke of him in the House of Lords with the tears which he did not even try to control running down his cheeks. But in his ordinary bearing there was little of the manner that makes a man a popular idol. He was not brilliant or dashing, or emotional or graceful. He was dry, cold, self-contained. Yet the people loved him and trusted in him; loved him perhaps especially because they so trusted in him. The nation was not ungrateful. It heaped honours on Wellington; it would have heaped more on him if it knew how. It gave him its almost unqualified admiration. On his

death it tried to give him such a public funeral as hero never had.

The new Parliament was called together in November. It brought into public life in England a man who afterwards made some mark in our politics, and whose intellect and debating power seemed at one time to promise him a position inferior to that of hardly anyone in the House of Commons. This was Mr. Robert Lowe, who had returned from one of the Australian colonies to enter political life in his native country. Mr. Lowe was a scholar of a highly cultured order; and, despite some serious defects of delivery, he proved to be a debater of the very highest class, especially gifted with the weapons of sarcasm, scorn, and invective. He was a Liberal in the intellectual sense; he was opposed to all restraints on education and on the progress of a career; but he had a detestation for democratic doctrines which almost amounted to a mania. With the whole force of a temperament very favourable to intellectual scorn he despised alike the rural Tory and the town Radical. His opinions were generally rather negative than positive. He did not seem to have any very positive opinions of any kind where politics were concerned. He was governed by a detestation of abstractions and sentimentalities, and 'views' of all sorts. If contempt for the intellectual weaknesses of an opposing party or doctrine could have made a great politician, Mr. Lowe would have won that name. In politics, however, criticism is not enough. One must be able to originate, to mould the will of others, to compromise, to lead while seeming to follow, often to follow while seeming to lead. Of gifts like these Mr. Lowe had no share. He never became more than a great Parliamentary critic of the acrid and vitriolic style.

Almost immediately on the assembling of the new Parliament, Mr. Villiers brought forward a resolution not merely pledging the House of Commons to a Free Trade policy, but pouring out a sort of censure on all who had hitherto failed to recognise its worth. This step was thought necessary, and was indeed made necessary by the errors of which Lord Derby had been guilty, and the preposterous vapourings of some of his less responsible followers. If the resolution had been passed, the Government must have resigned. But Lord Palmerston devised an amendment which afforded them the means of a more or less honourable retreat. This resolution pledged the House to the 'policy of unrestricted com-

petition firmly maintained and prudently extended;' but recorded no panegyric of the legislation of 1846, and consequent condemnation of those who opposed that legislation. The amendment was accepted by all but the small band of irreconcilable Protectionists: 468 voted for it; only 53 against it; and the moan of Protection was made.

Still the Government existed only on sufferance. There was a general expectation that the moment Mr. Disraeli came to set out a genuine financial scheme the fate of the Administration would be decided. So the event proved. Mr. Disraeli made a financial statement which showed remarkable capacity for dealing with figures. The skill with which the Chancellor of the Exchequer explained his measures and tossed his figures about convinced many even of his strongest opponents that he had the capacity to make a good budget if he only were allowed to do so by the conditions of his party's existence. But his Cabinet had come into office under special obligations to the country party and the farmers. They could not avoid making some experiment in the way of special legislation for the farmers. They had at the very least to put on an appearance of doing something for them. When Mr. Disraeli undertook to favour the country interest and the farmers, he must have known only too well that he was setting all the Free Traders and Peelites against him; and he knew at the same time that if he neglected the country party he was cutting the ground from beneath his feet. The principle of his budget was the reduction of the malt duties and the increase of the inhabited house duty. That reduction created a deficit, in order to supply which the inhabited house duty had to be doubled. The scheme was a complete failure. The farmers did not care much about the concession which had been made in their favour; those who would have had to pay for it in double taxation were bitterly indignant. The Whigs, the Free Traders, the Peelites, and such independent members or unattached members as Mr. Lowe and Mr. Bernal Osborne all fell on Mr. Disraeli. It became a combat *à outrance*. It well suited Mr. Disraeli's peculiar temperament. During the whole of his Parliamentary career he never fought so well as when he was free to indulge to the full the courage of despair.

The debate was one of the finest of its kind ever heard in Parliament during our time. The excitement on both sides was intense. The rivalry was hot and eager. Mr. Disraeli was animated by all the power of desperation, and was

evidently in a mood neither to give nor to take quarter. The House had hardly heard the concluding word of Disraeli's bitter and impassioned speech, when at two o'clock in the morning Mr. Gladstone leaped to his feet to answer him. Then began that long Parliamentary duel which only knew a truce when, at the close of the session of 1876, Mr. Disraeli crossed the threshold of the House of Commons for the last time, thenceforward to take his place among the peers as Lord Beaconsfield. The rivalry of this first heated and eventful night was a splendid display. Those who had thought it impossible that any impression could be made upon the House after the speech of Mr. Disraeli, had to acknowledge that a yet greater impression was produced by the unprepared reply of Mr. Gladstone. The House divided about four o'clock in the morning, and the Government were left in a minority of nineteen. That day the resignation of the Ministry was formally placed in the hands of the Queen. In a few days after, the Coalition Ministry was formed. Lord Aberdeen was Prime Minister; Lord John Russell took the Foreign Office; Lord Palmerston became Home Secretary; Mr. Gladstone was Chancellor of the Exchequer. The public were a good deal surprised that Lord Palmerston had taken such a place as that of Home Secretary. His name had been identified with the foreign policy of England, and it was not supposed that he felt the slightest interest in the ordinary business of the Home Department. But Palmerston would not consent to be Foreign Secretary on any terms but his own, and these terms were then out of the question.

The principal interest felt in the new Government was centred in the new Chancellor of the Exchequer. Mr. Gladstone was still a young man in the Parliamentary sense at least. He was but forty-three. His career had been in every way remarkable. He had entered public life at a very early age. He had been a distinguished debater in the House of Commons ever since he was one-and-twenty. Mr. Gladstone was born in Liverpool, and was the son of Sir John Gladstone, a Scotchman, who founded a great house in the seaport of the Mersey. He entered Parliament when very young as a *protégé* of the Newcastle family, and he soon faithfully attached himself to Sir Robert Peel. His knowledge of finance, his thorough appreciation of the various needs of a nation's commerce and business, his middle-class origin, all brought him into natural affinity with his great leader. He

became a Free Trader with Peel. He was not in the House of Commons, oddly enough, during the session when the Free Trade battle was fought and won. As he had changed his opinions with his leader, he felt a reluctance to ask the support of the Newcastle family for the borough which he had previously represented by virtue of their influence. But except for that short interval his whole career may be pronounced one long Parliamentary success. He was from the very outset recognised as a brilliant debater, and as one who promised to be an orator; but the first really great speech made by Mr. Gladstone was the reply to Mr. Disraeli on the memorable December morning which we have just described. That speech put him in the very foremost rank of English orators. Then perhaps he first showed to the full the one great quality in which as a Parliamentary orator he has never had a rival in our time: the readiness which seems to require no preparation, but can marshal all its arguments as if by instinct at a given moment, and the fluency which can pour out the most eloquent language as freely as though it were but the breath of the nostrils. When, shortly after the formation of the Coalition Ministry, Mr. Gladstone delivered his first budget, it was regarded as a positive curiosity of financial exposition. It was a performance that belonged to the department of the fine arts. The speech occupied several hours, and assuredly no listener wished it the shorter by a single sentence. Each time that he essayed the same task subsequently he accomplished just the same success. Mr. Gladstone's first oratorical qualification was his exquisite voice. Such a voice would make common-place seem interesting and lend something of fascination to dulness itself. It was singularly pure, clear, resonant, and sweet. The orator never seemed to use the slightest effort or strain in filling any hall and reaching the ear of the farthest among the audience. It was not a loud voice or of great volume; but strong, vibrating, and silvery. The words were always aided by energetic action and by the deep gleaming eyes of the orator. It is not to be denied that his wonderful gift of words sometimes led him astray. It was often such a fluency as that of a torrent on which the orator was carried away. Gladstone had to pay for his fluency by being too fluent. Sometimes he involved his sentence in parenthesis within parenthesis until the ordinary listener began to think extrication an impossibility; but the orator never failed to unravel

all the entanglements and to bring the passage out to a clear and legitimate conclusion.

Often, however, this superb exuberant rush of words added indescribable strength to the eloquence of the speaker. In passages of indignant remonstrance or denunciation, when word followed word, and stroke came down upon stroke, with a wealth of resource that seemed inexhaustible, the very fluency and variety of the speaker overwhelmed his audience. Interruption only gave him a new stimulus, and appeared to supply him with fresh resources of argument and illustration. His retorts leaped to his lips. Mr. Gladstone had not much humour of the playful kind, but he had a certain force of sarcastic and scornful rhetoric. He was always terribly in earnest. Whether the subject were great or small, he threw his whole soul into it. Once, in addressing a schoolboy gathering, he told his young listeners that if a boy ran he ought always to run as fast as he could; if he jumped, he ought always to jump as far as he could. He illustrated his maxim in his own career. He had no idea apparently of running or jumping in such measure as happened to please the fancy of the moment. He always exercised his splendid powers to the uttermost strain. Probably no one, past or present, had in combination so many gifts of voice, manner, fluency and argument, style, reason and passion, as Mr. Gladstone.

Mr. Gladstone grew slowly into Liberal convictions. At the time when he joined the Coalition Ministry he was still regarded as one who had scarcely left the camp of Toryism, and who had only joined that Ministry because it was a coalition. Years after he was applied to by the late Lord Derby to join a Ministry formed by him; and it was not supposed that there was anything unreasonable in the proposition. The first impulse towards Liberal principles was given to his mind probably by his change with his leader from Protection to Free Trade. When a man like Gladstone saw that his traditional principles and those of his party had broken down in any one direction it was but natural that he should begin to question their endurance in other directions. When Mr. Gladstone came to be convinced that there was no such law as the Protection principle at all; that it was a mere sham; that to believe in it was to be guilty of an economic heresy—then it was impossible for him not to begin questioning the genuineness of the whole system of political thought of which

it formed but a part. Perhaps, too, he was impelled towards Liberal principles at home by seeing what the effects of opposite doctrines had been abroad. He rendered memorable service to the Liberal cause of Europe by his eloquent protest against the brutal treatment of Baron Poerio and other Liberals of Naples who were imprisoned by the Neapolitan king—a protest which Garibaldi declared to have sounded the first trumpet-call of Italian liberty. In rendering service to Liberalism and to Europe he rendered service also to his own intelligence. He helped to set free his own spirit as well as the Neapolitan people. The common taunts addressed to public men who have changed their opinions were hardly ever applied to him. Even his enemies felt that the one idea always inspired him—a conscientious anxiety to do the right thing. The worst thing that was said of him was that he was too impulsive, and that his intelligence was too restless. He was an essayist, a critic, a Homeric scholar; a *dilettante* in art, music, and old china; he was a theological controversialist; he was a political economist, a financier, a practical administrator whose gift of mastering details has hardly ever been equalled; he was a statesman and an orator. No man could attempt so many things and not occasionally make himself the subject of a sneer. The intense gravity and earnestness of Gladstone's mind always, however, saved him from the special penalty of such versatility.

As yet, however, he is only the young statesman who was the other day the hope of the more solemn and solid Conservatives, and in whom they have not even yet entirely ceased to put some faith. The Coalition Ministry was so formed that it was not supposed a man necessarily nailed his colours to any mast when he joined it. More than one of Gladstone's earliest friends and political associates had a part in it. The Ministry might undoubtedly be called an Administration of All the Talents Except the late Lord Derby and Mr. Disraeli, it included almost every man of real ability who belonged to either of the two great parties of the State. The Manchester School had, of course, no place there; but they were not likely just yet to be recognised as constituting one of the elements out of which even a Coalition Ministry might be composed.

CHAPTER XI.

THE CRIMEAN WAR.

For forty years England had been at peace. There had indeed been little wars here and there with some of her Asiatic and African neighbours, but from Waterloo downward England knew no real war. The new generation were growing up in a happy belief that wars were things of the past for us, like the wearing of armour. During all the convulsions of the Continent, England had remained undisturbed. A new school as well as a new generation had sprung up. This school, full of faith but full of practical shrewd logic as well, was teaching with great eloquence and effect that the practice of settling international controversy by the sword was costly, barbarous, and blundering as well as wicked. The practice of the duel in England had utterly gone out. Why then should it be unreasonable to believe that war among nations might soon become equally obsolete?

Such certainly was the faith of a great many intelligent persons at the time when the Coalition Ministry was formed. The majority tacitly acquiesced in the belief without thinking much about it. They had never in their time seen England engaged in European war; and it was natural to assume that what they had never seen they were never likely to see. Suddenly all this happy quiet faith was disturbed by the Eastern 'question'—the question of what to do with the East of Europe. It was certain that things could not remain as they then were, and nothing else was certain. The Ottoman power had been settled during many centuries in the South-east of Europe. The Turk had many of the strong qualities and even the virtues of a great warlike conqueror; but he had no capacity or care for the arts of peace. He never thought of assimilating himself to those whom he had conquered, or them to him. The Turks were not, as a rule, oppressive to the races that lived under them. They were not habitual persecutors of the faiths they deemed heretical. Every now and then, indeed, some sudden fierce outburst of fanatical cruelty towards some of the subject sects horrified Europe, and reminded her that the conqueror who had settled himself down in her south-eastern corner was still a barbarian who had no right or place in civilised life.

But as a rule the Turk was disposed to look with disdainful composure on what he considered the religious follies of the heretical races who did not believe in the Prophet. They were objects of his scornful pity rather than of his anger.

At one time there is no doubt that all the powers of civilised Europe would gladly have seen the Turk driven out of our Continent. But the Turk was powerful for a long series of generations, and it seemed for a while rather a question whether he would not send the Europeans out of their own grounds. When he began to decay, and when his aggressive strength was practically all gone, it might have been thought that the Western Powers would then have managed somehow to get rid of him. But in the meantime the condition of Europe had greatly changed. No one not actually subject to the Turk was afraid of him any more; and other States had arisen strong for aggression. The uncertainties of these States as to the intentions of their neighbours and each other proved a better bulwark for the Turks than any warlike strength of their own could any longer have furnished. The growth of the Russian empire was of itself enough to change the whole conditions of the problem.

Nothing in our times has been more remarkable than the sudden growth of Russia. A few generations ago Russia was literally an inland State. She was shut up in the heart of Eastern Europe as if in a prison. The genius, the craft and the audacity of Peter the Great first broke the narrow bounds set to the Russia of his day, and extended her frontier to the sea. He was followed after a reign or two by the greatest woman probably who ever sat on a throne, Elizabeth of England not even excepted. Catherine the Second so ably followed the example of Peter the Great, that she extended the Russian frontiers in directions which he had not had opportunity to stretch to. By the time her reign was done, Russia was one of the great powers of Europe, entitled to enter into negotiations on a footing of equality with the proudest States of the Continent. Unlike Turkey, Russia had always shown a yearning after the latest developments of science and of civilisation. A nation that tries to appear more civilised than it really is ends very often by becoming more civilised than its neighbours ever thought it likely to be.

The wars against Napoleon brought Russia into close alliance with England, Austria, Prussia, and other European States of old and advanced civilisation. She was

recognised as a valuable friend and a most formidable enemy. Gradually it became evident that she could be aggressive as well as conservative. After a while it grew to be a fixed conviction in the mind of the Liberalism of Western Europe that Russia was the greatest obstacle then existing in civilisation to the spread of popular ideas. The Turk was comparatively harmless in that sense. He was well content now, so much had his ancient ambition shrunk and his ancient war spirit gone out, if his strong and restless neighbour would only let him alone. But he was brought at more than one point into especial collision with Russia. Many of the provinces he ruled over in European Turkey were of Sclavonian race, and of the religion of the Greek Church. They were thus affined by a double tie to the Russian people, and therefore the manner in which Turkey dealt with those provinces was a constant source of dispute between Russia and her. The Russians are a profoundly religious people. A Russian emperor could not be loved if he did not declare his undying resolve to be the protector of the Christian populations of Turkey. Much of this was probably sincere and single-minded on the part of the Russian people and most of the Russian politicians. But the other States of Europe began to suspect that mingled up with benign ideas of protecting the Christian populations of Turkey might be a desire to extend the frontier of Russia to the southward in a new direction. Europe had seen by what craft and what audacious enterprises Russia had managed to extend her empire to the sea in other quarters; it began to be commonly believed that her next object of ambition would be the possession of Constantinople and the Bosphorus. It was reported that a will of Peter the Great had left it as an injunction to his successors to turn all the efforts of their policy towards that object. The particular document which was believed to be a will of Peter the Great enjoined on all succeeding Russian sovereigns never to relax in the extension of their territory northward on the Baltic and southward on the Black Sea shores, and to encroach as far as possible in the direction of Constantinople and the Indies. It therefore seemed to be the natural business of other European powers to see that the defects of the Ottoman Government, such as they were, should not be made an excuse for helping Russia to secure the objects of her special ambition. England of course, above all the rest, had an interest in watching over every movement that threatened in any way to interfere with the

highway to India; still more her peaceful and secure possession of India itself. England, Russia and Turkey were alike in one respect: they were all Asiatic as well as European powers. But the days of Turkey's interfering with any great State were long over. On the contrary, there seemed something like a natural antagonism between England and Russia in the East. The Russians were extending their frontier towards that of our Indian empire. Our officers and diplomatic emissaries reported that they were continually confronted by the evidences of Russian intrigue in Central Asia. We have already seen how much influence the real or supposed intrigues of Russia had in directing our policy in Afghanistan. It was in great measure out of these alarms that there grew up among certain statesmen and classes in this country the conviction that the maintenance of the integrity of the Turkish empire was part of the national duty of England.

Sharply defined, the condition of things was this: Russia, by reason of her sympathy of religion or race with Turkey's Christian populations, was brought into chronic antagonism with Turkey; England, by reason of her Asiatic possessions, was kept in just the same state of antagonism to Russia. A crisis at last arose that threw England into direct hostility with Russia.

That crisis came about during the later years of the reign of the Emperor Nicholas. He saw its opening, but not its close. Nicholas was a man of remarkable character. He had many of the ways of an Asiatic despot. He had a strong ambition, a fierce and fitful temper, a daring but sometimes too a vacillating will. He had many magnanimous and noble qualities, and moods of sweetness and gentleness. A certain excitability ran through the temperament of all his house, which, in some of its members, broke into actual madness. The Emperor at one time was very popular in England. He had visited the Queen, and he had impressed everyone by his noble presence, his lofty stature, his singular personal beauty, his blended dignity and familiarity of manner. He talked as if he had no higher ambition than to be in friendly alliance with England. When he wished to convey his impression of the highest degree of personal loyalty and honour, he always spoke of 'the word of an English gentleman.' There can, indeed, be little doubt that the Emperor was sincerely anxious to keep on terms of cordial friendship with England; and, what is more, had no idea until the very last that the way he was walking was one which England could not consent to tread. His brother and predecessor had been in close

alliance with England; his own ideal hero was the Duke of Wellington; he had made up his mind that when the division of the spoils of Turkey came about, England and he could best consult for their own interests and the peace of the world by making the appropriation a matter of joint arrangement.

When he visited England in 1844, for the second time, Nicholas had several conversations with the Duke of Wellington and with Lord Aberdeen, then Foreign Secretary, about Turkey and her prospects, and what would be likely to happen in the case of her dissolution, which he believed to be imminent. When he returned to Russia he had a memorandum drawn up by Count Nesselrode, his Chancellor, embodying the views which, according to Nicholas's impressions, were entertained alike by him and by the British statesmen with whom he had been conversing. The memorandum spoke of the imperative necessity of Turkey being made to keep her engagements and to treat her Christian subjects with toleration and mildness. On such conditions it was laid down that England and Russia must alike desire her preservation; but the document proceeded to say that nevertheless these States could not conceal from themselves the fact that the Ottoman empire contained within itself many elements of dissolution, and that unforeseen events might at any time hasten its fall. 'In the uncertainty which hovers over the future a single fundamental idea seems to admit of a really practical application; that is, that the danger which may result from a catastrophe in Turkey will be much diminished if in the event of its occurring Russia and England have come to an understanding as to the course to be taken by them in common. That understanding will be the more beneficial inasmuch as it will have the full assent of Austria, between whom and Russia there already exists an entire accord.' This document was sent to London and kept in the archives of the Foreign Office. The Emperor of Russia evidently believed that his views were shared by English statesmen. Therefore, it is to be regretted that the English statesmen should have listened to Nicholas without saying something very distinct to show that they were not admitting or accepting any combination of purpose; or that they should have received his memorandum without some clear disclaimer of their being in any way bound by its terms. We could scarcely have been too emphatic or too precise in conveying to the Emperor of Russia our determination to have nothing to do with any such conspiracy.

Time went on, and the Emperor thought he saw an occasion for still more clearly explaining his plans and for reviving the supposed understanding with England. Lord Aberdeen came into office as Prime Minister of this country; Lord Aberdeen, who was Foreign Secretary when Nicholas was in England in 1844. In January 1853, the Emperor had several conversations with our minister, Sir G. Hamilton Seymour, about the future of Turkey and the arrangements it might be necessary for England and Russia to make regarding it. The conversations were renewed again and again afterwards. They all tended towards the one purpose. The Emperor urged that England and Russia ought to make arrangements beforehand as to the inheritance of the Ottoman in Europe—before what he regarded as the approaching and inevitable day when the 'sick man'—so the Emperor called Turkey—must come to die. If only England and Russia could arrive at an understanding on the subject, he declared that it was a matter of indifference to him what other powers might think or say. He spoke of the several millions of Christians in Turkey whose rights he was called upon to watch over, and he remarked—the remark is of significance—that the right of watching over them was secured to him by treaty. The Emperor was evidently under the impression that the interests of England and of Russia were united in this proposed transaction. He had no idea of anything but the most perfect frankness so far as we were concerned. But the English Government never, after the disclosures of Sir Hamilton Seymour, put any faith in Nicholas. They regarded him as nothing better than a plotter. The English Minister and the English Government could only answer the Emperor's overtures by saying that they did not think it quite usual to enter into arrangements for the spoliation of a friendly power, and that England had no desire to succeed to any of the possessions of Turkey.

The conversations with Sir Hamilton Seymour formed but an episode in the history of the events that were then going on. There had long been going on a dispute about the Holy Places in Palestine. The claims of the Greek Church and those of the Latin Church were in antagonism there. The Emperor of Russia was the protector of the Greek Church; the Kings of France had long had the Latin Church under their protection. The Holy Places to which the Latins raised a claim were the great Church in Bethlehem; the Sanctuary of the

Nativity; the tomb of the Virgin; the Stone of Anointing; the Seven Arches of the Virgin in the Church of the Holy Sepulchre. In the reign of Francis the First of France, a treaty was made with the Sultan by which France was acknowledged the protector of the Holy Places in Palestine, and of the monks of the Latin Church who took on themselves the care of the sacred monuments and memorials. But the Greek Church afterwards obtained firmans from the Sultan; and the Greeks claimed on the strength of these concessions that they had as good a right as the Latins to take care of the Holy Places. Disputes were always arising, and of course these were aggravated by the fact that France was supposed to be concerned in the protection of one set of disputants and Russia in that of another. The claims at length came to be identified with the States which respectively protected them. An advantage of the smallest kind gained by the Latins was viewed as an insult to Russia; a concession to the Greeks was a snub to France.

It was France which first stirred the controversy in the time just before the Crimean War. The French ambassador, M. de Lavalette, is said to have threatened that a French fleet should appear off Jaffa, and even hinted at a French occupation of Jerusalem, 'when,' as he significantly put it, 'we should have all the sanctuaries.' The cause of all this energy is not far to seek. The Prince President had only just succeeded in procuring himself to be installed as Emperor; and he was very anxious to distract the attention of Frenchmen from domestic politics to some showy and startling policy abroad. This controversy between the Church of the East and the Church of the West tempted him into activity as one that seemed likely to give him an opportunity of displaying the power of France and of the new system without any very great danger or responsibility.

The key of the whole controversy out of which the Eastern war arose, and out of which indeed all subsequent complications in the East came as well, was said to be found in a clause of the Treaty of Kutchuk-Kainardji. The Treaty of Kutchuk-Kainardji was made on July 10, 1774, between the Ottoman Porte and Catherine II. of Russia after a war in which the arms of the great Empress had been completely victorious. The seventh clause declared that the Sublime Porte promised 'to protect constantly the Christian religion and its churches; and also to allow the minister of the

Imperial Court of Russia to make on all occasions representations as well in favour of the new church in Constantinople, of which mention will be made in the fourteenth article, as in favour of those who officiate therein, promising to take such representations into due consideration as being made by a confidential functionary of a neighbouring and sincerely friendly power.' Not much possibility of misunderstanding about these words, one might feel inclined to say. We turn then to the fourteenth article alluded to, in order to discover if in its wording lies the perplexity of meaning which led to such momentous and calamitous results. We find that by this article it is simply permitted to the Court of Russia to build a public church of the Greek rite in the Galata quarter of Constantinople, in addition to the chapel built in the house of the minister; and it is declared that the new church 'shall be always under the protection of the ministers of the (Russian) empire, and shielded from all obstruction and all damage.' Here, then, we seem to have two clauses of the simplest meaning and by no means of first-class importance. The latter clause allows Russia to build a new church in Constantinople; the former allows the Russian minister to make representations to the Porte on behalf of the church and of those who officiate in it. What difference of opinion, it may be asked, could possibly arise? The difference was this: Russia claimed a right of protectorate over all the Christians of the Greek Church in Turkey as the consequence of the seventh clause of the treaty. She insisted that when Turkey gave her a right to interfere on behalf of the worshippers in one particular church, the same right extended so far as to cover all the worshippers of the same denomination in every part of the Ottoman dominions. The great object of Russia throughout all the negotiations that preceded the Crimean War was to obtain from the Porte an admission of the existence of such a protectorate. Such an acknowledgment would, in fact, have made the Emperor of Russia the patron and all but the ruler of by far the larger proportion of the populations of European Turkey. The Sultan would no longer have been master in his own dominions. The Greek Christians would naturally have regarded the Russian Emperor's right of intervention on their behalf as constituting a protectorate far more powerful than the nominal rule of the Sultan. They would have known that the ultimate decision of any dispute in which they were concerned rested with the Emperor, and not with the Sultan; and they would soon have

come to look upon the Emperor, and not the Sultan, as their actual sovereign.

Now it does not seem likely on the face of things that any ruler of a state would have consented to hand over to a more powerful foreign monarch such a right over the great majority of his subjects. Still, if Turkey, driven to her last defences, had no alternative but to make such a concession, the Emperors of Russia could not be blamed for insisting that it should be carried out. The terms of the article in the treaty itself certainly do not seem to admit of such a construction. Whenever we find Russia putting a claim into plain words, we find England, through her ministers, refusing to give it their acknowledgment. Diplomacy, therefore, was powerless to do good during all the protracted negotiations that set in, before the Crimean War, for the plain reason that the only object of the Emperor of Russia in entering upon negotiation at all was one which the other European powers regarded as absolutely inadmissible.

The dispute about the Holy Places was easily settled. The Porte cared very little about the matter, and was willing enough to come to any fair terms by which the whole controversy could be got rid of. But the demands of Russia went on just as before. Prince Mentschikoff, a fierce, rough man, unable or unwilling to control his temper, was sent with demands to Constantinople. Mentschikoff brought his proposals with him cut and dry in the form of a convention which he called upon Turkey to accept without more ado. Turkey refused, and Prince Mentschikoff withdrew in real or affected rage, and presently the Emperor Nicholas sent two divisions of his army across the Pruth to take possession of the Danubian principalities.

Diplomacy, however, did not give in even then. A note was concocted at Vienna which Russia at once offered to accept. The four great Powers who were carrying on the business of mediation were at first quite charmed with the note, with the readiness of Russia to accept it, and with themselves; and but for the interposition of Lord Stratford de Redcliffe, our ambassador at Constantinople, who showed great acuteness and force of character through all these negotiations, it seems highly probable that it would have been agreed to by all the parties concerned. Lord Stratford, however, saw plainly that the note was a virtual concession to Russia of all that she specially desired to have, and all that

Europe was unwilling to concede to her. It contained, for instance, words which declared that the Government of his Majesty the Sultan would remain 'faithful to the letter and the spirit of the stipulations of the Treaties of Kainardji and of Adrianople, relative to the protection of the Christian religion.' These words, in a note drawn up for the purpose of satisfying the Emperor of Russia, could not but be understood as recognising the interpretation of the Treaty of Kainardji on which Russia had always insisted. The Russian Government refused to accept any modifications.

From that time all hopes of peace were over. Our troops were moving towards Malta; the streets of London, of Liverpool, of Southampton, and other towns, were ringing with the cheers of enthusiastic crowds gathered together to watch the marching of troops destined for the East. Turkey had actually declared war against Russia. We had known so little of war for nearly forty years, that added to all the other emotions which the coming of battle must bring was the mere feeling of curiosity as to the sensation produced by a state of war. It was an abstraction to the living generation—a thing to read of and discuss and make poetry and romance out of; but they could not yet realise what itself was like.

Meantime where was Lord Palmerston? He of all men, one would think, must have been pleased with the turn things were taking. He was really very busy all this time in his new duties. Lord Palmerston was a remarkably efficient and successful Home Secretary. His unceasing activity loved to show itself in whatever department he might be called upon to occupy. He brought to the somewhat prosaic duties of his new office all the energy which he had formerly shown in managing revolutions and dictating to foreign courts. The ticket-of-leave system dates from the time of his administration. The measure to abate the smoke nuisance, by compelling factories under penalties to consume their own smoke, is also the offspring of Palmerston's activity in the Home Office. The Factory Acts were extended by him. He went energetically to work in the shutting up of graveyards in the metropolis. He was acquiring a new and a somewhat odd reputation in his way of answering deputations and letters. Lord Palmerston was always civil and cordial; he was full of a peculiar kind of fresh common sense, and always ready to apply it to any subject whatever. He could at any time say

some racy thing which set the public wondering and laughing. He had not a poetic or philosophic mind. In clearing his intelligence from all that he would have called prejudice or superstition, he had cleared out also much of the deeper sympathetic faculty which enables one man to understand the feelings and get at the springs of conduct in the breasts of other men. No one can doubt that his jaunty way of treating grave and disputed subjects offended many pure and simple minds. Yet it was a mistake to suppose that mere levity dictated his way of dealing with the prejudices of others. He had often given the question his deepest attention, and come to a conclusion with as much thought as his temperament would have allowed to any subject. The difference between him and graver men was that when he had come to a conclusion seriously, he loved to express his views humorously. But there can be no doubt that Palmerston often made enemies by his seeming levity when another man could easily have made friends by saying just the same thing in grave words. The majority of the House of Commons liked him because he amused them and made them laugh; and they thought no more of the matter.

But the war is now fairly launched; and Palmerston is to all appearance what would be vulgarly called 'out of the swim.' Every eye was turned to him. One day it was given out that Palmerston had actually resigned. It was at once asserted that his resignation was caused by difference of opinion between him and his colleagues on the Eastern policy of the Government. But on the other hand it was as stoutly affirmed that the difference of opinion had only to do with the new Reform Bill which Lord John Russell was preparing to introduce. Few people in England who cared anything about the whole question believed that at such a time Lord Palmerston would have gone out of office because he did not quite like the details of a Reform Bill, or that the Cabinet would have obstinately clung to such a scheme just then in spite of his opposition. When Lord Palmerston resumed his place in the Ministry, the public at large felt certain that the war spirit was now at last to have its way, and that the dallyings of the peace-lovers were over. Nor was England long left to guess at the reason why Lord Palmerston had so suddenly resigned his office, and so suddenly returned to it. A great disaster had fallen upon Turkey. Her fleet had been destroyed by the Rus-

sians at Sinope, a considerable seaport town and naval station belonging to Turkey on the southern shore of the Black Sea, on November 30, 1853. The attack was not treacherous, but openly made; not sudden, but clearly announced by previous acts. Russia and Turkey were not only formally but actually at war. The Turks were the first to begin the actual military operations. But at the time, when the true state of affairs was little known in England, the account of the 'massacre of Sinope' was received as if it had been the tale of some unparalleled act of treachery and savagery; and the eagerness of the country for war against Russia became inflamed to actual passion.

It was at that moment that Palmerston resigned his office. The Cabinet were still not prepared to go as far as he would have gone. Lord Palmerston, supported by the urgent pressure of the Emperor of the French, succeeded, however, in at last overcoming their determination; and Lord Palmerston resumed his place, master of the situation. France and England told Russia that they were resolved to prevent any repetition of the Sinope affair; that their squadrons would enter the Black Sea with orders to request, and if necessary to constrain, every Russian ship met in the Euxine to return to Sebastopol; and to repel by force any act of aggression afterwards attempted against the Ottoman territory or flag. This was, in fact, war. When the resolution of the Western Cabinets was communicated to the Emperor of Russia he withdrew his representatives from London and Paris. On February 21, 1854, the diplomatic relations between Russia and the two allied powers were brought to a stop. Six weeks before this the English and French fleets had entered the Black Sea. A few days after a crowd assembled in front of the Royal Exchange to watch the performance of a ceremonial that had been little known to the living generation. The Sergeant-at-Arms, accompanied by some of the officials of the City, read from the steps of the Royal Exchange her Majesty's declaration of war against Russia.

The principal reason for the separation of the two Western Powers of Europe from the other great States was found in the condition of Prussia. The Prussian sovereign was related to the Emperor of Russia, and his kingdom was almost overshadowed by Russian influence. Prussia had come to occupy a lower position in Europe than she had ever before held during her existence as a kingdom. The King of Prussia was

a highly-cultured, amiable, literary man. He loved letters and art in a sort of *dilettante* way; he had good impulses and a weak nature; he was a dreamer; a sort of philosopher *manqué*. He was unable to make up his mind to any momentous decision until the time for rendering it effective had gone by. A man naturally truthful, he was often led by very weakness into acts that seemed irreconcilable with his previous promises and engagements. He could say witty and sarcastic things, and when political affairs went wrong with him, he could console himself with one or two sharp sayings only heard of by those immediately around him; and then the world might go its way for him. He went so far with the allies as to lead them for a while to believe that he was going all the way; but at the last moment he broke off, declared that the interests of Prussia did not require or allow him to engage in a war, and left France and England to walk their own road. Austria could not venture upon such a war without the co-operation of Prussia. Austria and Prussia made an arrangement between themselves for mutual defence in case the progress of the war should directly imperil the interests of either; and England and France undertook in alliance the task of chastising the presumption and restraining the ambitious designs of Russia. It must be remembered that the controversy between Russia and the West really involved several distinct questions, in some of which Prussia had absolutely no direct interest and Austria very little. Foremost among these was the question of the Straits of the Dardanelles and the Bosphorus.

Russia and Turkey between them surrounded the whole of the Black Sea with their territory. The only outlet of Russia on the southern side is the Black Sea. The Black Sea is, save for one little outlet at its south-western extremity, a huge land-locked lake. That little outlet is the narrow channel called the Bosphorus. The Bosphorus is some seventeen miles in length, and in some places it is hardly more than half a mile in breadth. But it is very deep all through, so that ships of war can float close up to its very shores on either side. It passes between the city of Constantinople and its Asiatic suburb of Scutari, and then opens into the little Sea of Marmora. Out of the Sea of Marmora the way westward is through the channel of the Dardanelles, which forms the passage into the Archipelago, and thence into the Mediterranean. The channel of the Dardanelles is, like the Bosphorus, narrow and very deep, but it pursues its course for some forty miles.

Anyone who holds a map in his hand will see at once how Turkey and Russia alike are affected by the existence of the Straits on either extremity of the Sea of Marmora. Close up these Straits against vessels of war, and the capital of the Sultan is absolutely unassailable from the sea. Close them, on the other hand, and the Russian fleet in the Black Sea is absolutely cut off from the Mediterranean and the Western world. But then it has to be remembered that the same act of closing would secure the Russian ports and shores on the Black Sea from the approach of any of the great navies of the West. The Dardanelles and the Bosphorus being alike such narrow channels, and being edged alike by Turkish territory, were not regarded as high seas. The Sultans always claimed the right to exclude foreign ships of war from both the Straits. The closing of the Straits had been the subject of a perfect succession of treaties.

As matters stood then, the Sultan was not only permitted but was bound to close the Straits in times of peace, and no navy might enter them without his consent even in times of war. By this treaty the Black Sea fleet of Russia became literally a Black Sea fleet, wholly cut off from the Mediterranean and Western Europe. Naturally Russia chafed at this; but at the same time she was not willing to see the restriction withdrawn in favour of an arrangement that would leave the Straits, and consequently the Black Sea, open to the navies of France and England. Therefore it was natural that the ambition of Russia should tend towards the ultimate possession of Constantinople and the Straits for herself; but as this was an ambition the fulfilment of which seemed far off and beset with vast dangers, her object, meanwhile, was to gain as much influence and ascendency as possible over the Ottoman Government; to make it practically her vassal, and in any case to prevent any other great Power from obtaining the influence and ascendency which she coveted for herself. Now the tendency of this ambition and of all the intermediate claims and disputes with regard to the opening or closing of the Straits was of importance to Europe generally as a part of Russian aggrandisement; but of the great Powers they concerned England most; France as a Mediterranean and a naval power; Austria only in a third and remoter degree; and Prussia at the time of King Frederick William least of all.

To the great majority of the English people this war was popular, partly because of the natural and inevitable reaction

against the doctrines of peace and mere trading prosperity, partly too because of its novelty. The doctrines of the Peace Society had never taken any hold of this country at all. Its votaries were in any case not many at the time when the Crimean War broke out. They had very little influence on the course of the national policy. They were assailed with a flippant and a somewhat ignoble ridicule. The worst reproach that could be given to men like Mr. Cobden and Mr. Bright was to accuse them of being members of the Peace Society. It does not appear that either man was a member of the actual organisation. Mr. Bright's religious creed made him necessarily a votary of peace; Mr. Cobden had attended meetings called with the futile purpose of establishing peace among nations by the operation of good feeling and of common sense.

In the Cabinet itself there were men who disliked the idea of a war quite as much as they did. Lord Aberdeen detested war, and thought it so absurd a way of settling national disputes, that almost until the first cannon-shot had been fired he could not bring himself to believe in the possibility of the intelligent English people being drawn into it. Mr. Gladstone had a conscientious and a sensitive objection to war in general as a brutal and an unchristian occupation, although his feelings would not have carried him so far away as to prevent his recognition of the fact that war might often be a just, a necessary, and a glorious undertaking on the part of a civilised nation. The difficulties of the hour were considerably enhanced by the differences of opinion that prevailed in the Cabinet.

There were other differences there as well as those that belonged to the mere abstract question of the glory or the guilt of war. It soon became clear that two parties of the Cabinet looked on the war and its objects with different eyes and interests. On one side there were Lord Aberdeen and Mr. Gladstone, who were concerned far more for the welfare of Turkey's Christian subjects than for the stability of Turkey or the humiliation of Russia. On the other side was Lord Palmerston, gay, resolute, clear as to his own purpose, convinced to the heart's core of everything which just then it was for the advantage of his cause to believe. The brave Turk had to be supported; the wicked Russian had to be put down. It was impossible to doubt on which side were to be found the materials for the successful conduct of the enterprise which was now so popular with the country. The most conscientious men might differ about the prudence or the

moral propriety of the war; but to those who once accepted its necessity and wished our side to win, there could be no possible doubt, even for members of the Peace Society, as to the importance of having Lord Palmerston either at the head of affairs or in charge of the war itself. The moment the war actually broke out it became evident to everyone that Palmerston's interval of comparative inaction and obscurity was well-nigh over.

England then and France entered the war as allies. Lord Raglan, formerly Lord Fitzroy Somerset, an old pupil of the Great Duke in the Peninsular War, and who had lost his right arm serving under Wellington at Waterloo, was appointed to command the English forces. Marshal St. Arnaud, a bold, brilliant soldier of fortune, was entrusted by the Emperor of the French with the leadership of the soldiers of France. The allied forces went out to the East and assembled at Varna, on the Black Sea shore, from which they were to make their descent on the Crimea. The invasion of the Crimea, however, was not welcomed by the English or the French commander. It was undertaken by Lord Raglan out of deference to the recommendations of the Government; and by Marshal St. Arnaud out of deference to the Emperor of the French. The allied forces were therefore conveyed to the south-western shore of the Crimea, and effected a landing in Kalamita Bay, a short distance north of the point at which the river Alma runs into the sea. Sebastopol itself lies about thirty miles to the south; and then more southward still, divided by the bulk of a jutting promontory from Sebastopol, is the harbour of Balaklava. The disembarkation began on the morning of September 14, 1854, and was effected without any opposition from the Russians. On September 19 the allies marched out of their encampments and reached the Alma about noon on September 20. They found that they had to cross the river in the face of the Russian batteries armed with heavy guns on the highest points of the hills or bluffs, of scattered artillery, and of dense masses of infantry which covered the hills. The Russians were under the command of Prince Mentschikoff. The soldiers of the Czar fought stoutly and stubbornly as they have always done; but they could not stand up against the blended vehemence and obstinacy of the English and French. The river was crossed, the opposite heights were mounted, Prince Mentschikoff's great redoubt was carried, the Russians were driven from the field,

the allies occupied their ground; the victory was to the Western Powers. The first field was fought, and we had won.

The Russians ought to have been pursued. But there was no pursuit. Lord Raglan was eager to follow up the victory; but the French had as yet hardly any cavalry, and Marshal St. Arnaud would not agree to any further enterprise that day. Lord Raglan believed that he ought not to persist; and nothing was done. Except for the bravery of those who fought, the battle was not much to boast of. But it was the first great battle which for nearly forty years our soldiers had fought with a civilised enemy. The military authorities and the country were well disposed to make the most of it. The gallant medley on the banks of the Alma and the fruitless interval of inaction that followed it were told of as if men were speaking of some battle of the gods. Very soon, however, a different note came to be sounded. The campaign had been opened under conditions differing from those of most campaigns that went before it. Science had added many new discoveries to the art of war. Literature had added one remarkable contribution of her own to the conditions amid which campaigns were to be carried on. She had added the 'special correspondent.' The war correspondent now scrawls his despatches as he sits in his saddle under the fire of the enemy; he scrawls them with a pencil, noting and describing each incident of the fight, so far as he can see it, as coolly as if he were describing a review of volunteers in Hyde Park; and he contrives to send off his narrative by telegraph before the victor in the fight has begun to pursue, or has settled down to hold the ground he won; and the war correspondent's story is expected to be as brilliant and picturesque in style as it ought to be exact and faithful in its statements. In the days of the Crimea things had not advanced quite so far as that; the war was well on before the submarine telegraph between Varna and the Crimea allowed of daily reports; but the feats of the war correspondent then filled men's minds with wonder. When the expedition was leaving England it was accompanied by a special correspondent from each of the great daily papers of London. The *Times* sent out a representative whose name almost immediately became celebrated —Mr. William Howard Russell, the first of war correspondents in that day as Mr. Archibald Forbes of the *Daily News* was at a later period. Mr. Russell rendered some service to the

English army and to his country, however, which no brilliancy of literary style would alone have enabled him to do. It was to his great credit as a man of judgment and observation that, being a civilian who had never before seen one puff of war-smoke, he was able to distinguish between the confusion inseparable from all actual levying of war and the confusion that comes of distinctly bad administration. Mr. Russell soon saw that there was confusion; and he had the soundness of judgment to know that the confusion was that of a breaking-down system. Therefore, while the fervour of delight in the courage and success of our army was still fresh in the minds of the public at home, while every music-hall was ringing with the cheap rewards of valour in the shape of popular glorifications of our commanders and our soldiers, the readers of the *Times* began to learn that things were faring badly indeed with the conquering army of the Alma. The ranks were thinned by the ravages of cholera. The hospitals were in a wretchedly disorganised condition. Stores of medicines and strengthening food were decaying in places where no one wanted them or could well get at them, while men were dying in hundreds among our tents in the Crimea for lack of them. The system of clothing, of transport, of feeding, of nursing—everything had broken down. The special correspondent of the *Times* and other correspondents continued to din these things into the ears of the public at home. Exultation began to give way to a feeling of dismay. The patriotic anger against the Russians was changed for a mood of deep indignation against our own authorities and our own war administration. It soon became apparent to everyone that the whole campaign had been planned on the assumption of our military authorities here at home—we do not speak of the commanders in the field—that Sebastopol was to fall like another Jericho, at the sound of the war-trumpets' blast.

Our commanders in the field were, on the contrary, rather disposed to overrate than to underrate the strength of the Russians. It is very likely that if a sudden dash had been made at Sebastopol by land and sea, it might have been taken almost at the very opening of the war. But the delay gave the Russians full warning; and they did not neglect it. On the third day after the battle of the Alma the Russians sank seven vessels of their Black Sea fleet at the entrance of the harbour of Sebastopol, and the entrance of the harbour was barred as by sunken rocks against any approach of an

enemy's ship. There was an end to every dream of a sudden capture of Sebastopol. The allied armies moved again from their positions on the Alma to Balaklava, which lies south of the city, on the other side of a promontory, and which has a port that might enable them to secure a constant means of communication between the armies and the fleets. Sebastopol was but a few miles off, and preparations were at once made for an attack on it by land and sea. On October 17 the attack began. It was practically a failure. The fleet could not get near enough to the sea-forts of Sebastopol to make their broadsides of any real effect, because of the shallow water and the sunken ships; and although the attack from the land was vigorous and was fiercely kept up, yet it could not carry its object.

The Russians attacked the allies fiercely on October 25, in the hope of obtaining possession of Balaklava. The attempt was bold and brilliant; but it was splendidly repulsed. Never did a day of battle do more credit to English courage, or less perhaps to English generalship. The cavalry particularly distinguished themselves. It was in great measure on our side a cavalry action. It will be memorable in all English history as the battle in which occurred the famous charge of the Light Brigade. Owing to some fatal misconception of the meaning of an order from the Commander-in-Chief, the Light Brigade, 607 men in all, charged what has been rightly described as 'the Russian army in position.' Of the 607 men 198 came back. Long, painful, and hopeless were the disputes about this fatal order. The controversy can never be wholly settled. The officer who bore the order was one of the first who fell in the outset. All Europe, all the world, rang with wonder and admiration of the futile and splendid charge. The Poet Laureate sang of it in spirited verses. Perhaps its best epitaph was contained in the celebrated comment ascribed to the French General Bosquet, and which has since become proverbial, and been quoted until men are well-nigh tired of it—'It was magnificent, but it was not war.'

Next day, the enemy made another vigorous attack on a much larger scale, moving out of Sebastopol itself, and were again repulsed. On November 5 the Russians made another grand attack on the allies, chiefly on the British, and were once more splendidly repulsed. The plateau of Inkerman was the principal scene of the struggle. It was occupied by the Guards and a few British regiments, on whom fell,

until General Bosquet with his French was able to come to their assistance, the task of resisting a Russian army. This was the severest and the fiercest engagement of the campaign. Inkerman was described at the time as the soldiers' battle. Strategy, it was said everywhere, there was none. The attack was made under cover of a dark and drizzling mist. The battle was fought for a while almost absolutely in the dark. There was hardly any attempt to direct the allies by any principles of scientific warfare. The soldiers fought stubbornly a series of hand-to-hand fights, and we are entitled to say that the better men won in the end.

Meanwhile what were people saying in England? They were indignantly declaring that the whole campaign was a muddle. The temper of a people thus stimulated and thus disappointed is almost always indiscriminating and unreasonable in its censure. The first idea is to find a victim. The victim on whom the anger of a large portion of the public turned in this instance was the Prince Consort. The most absurd ideas, the most cruel and baseless calumnies, were in circulation about him. He was accused of having out of some inscrutable motive made use of all his secret influence to prevent the success of the campaign. He was charged with being in a conspiracy with Prussia, with Russia, with no one knew exactly whom, to weaken the strength of England, and secure a triumph for her enemies. Stories were actually told at one time of his having been arrested for high treason. The charges which sprang of this heated and unjust temper on the part of the public did not indeed long prevail against the Prince Consort. When once the subject came to be taken up in Parliament it was shown almost in a moment that there was not the slightest ground or excuse for any of the absurd surmises and cruel suspicions which had been creating so much agitation. The agitation collapsed in a moment. But while it lasted it was both vehement and intense, and gave much pain to the Prince, and far more pain still to the Queen his wife.

The winter was gloomy at home as well as abroad. The news constantly arriving from the Crimea told only of devastation caused by foes far more formidable than the Russians—sickness, bad weather, bad management. The Black Sea was swept and scourged by terrible storms. The destruction of transport-ships laden with winter stores for our men was of incalculable injury to the army. Clothing, blanketing, provisions, hospital necessaries of all kinds, were destroyed in vast quantities. The loss of life among the crews of the vessels was immense.

A storm was nearly as disastrous in this way as a battle. On shore the sufferings of the army were unspeakable. The tents were torn from their pegs and blown away. The officers and men were exposed to the bitter cold and the fierce stormy blasts. Our soldiers had for the most part little experience or even idea of such cold as they had to encounter this gloomy winter. The intensity of the cold was so great that no one might dare to touch any metal substance in the open air with his bare hand under the penalty of leaving the skin behind him. The hospitals for the sick and wounded at Scutari were in a wretchedly disorganised condition. They were for the most part in an absolutely chaotic condition as regards arrangement and supply. In some instances medical stores were left to decay at Varna, or were found lying useless in the holds of vessels in Balaklava bay, which were needed for the wounded at Scutari. The medical officers were able and zealous men; the stores were provided and paid for so far as our Government was concerned; but the stores were not brought to the medical men. These had their hands all but idle, their eyes and souls tortured by the sight of sufferings which they were unable to relieve for want of the commonest appliances of the hospital. The most extraordinary instances of blunder and confusion were constantly coming to light. Great consignments of boots arrived, and were found to be all for the left foot. Mules for the conveyance of stores were contracted for and delivered, but delivered so that they came into the hands of the Russians and not of us. Shameful frauds were perpetrated in the instance of some of the contracts for preserved meat. The evils of the hospital disorganisation were happily made a means of bringing about a new system of attending to the sick and wounded in war which has already created something like a revolution in the manner of treating the victims of battle. Mr. Sidney Herbert, horrified at the way in which things were managed in Scutari and the Crimea, applied to a distinguished woman who had long taken a deep interest in hospital reform to superintend personally the nursing of the soldiers. Miss Florence Nightingale was the daughter of a wealthy English country gentleman. She had chosen not to pass her life in fashionable or æsthetic inactivity; and had from a very early period turned her attention to sanitary questions. She had studied nursing as a science and a system; had made herself acquainted with the working of various continental institutions; and about the time when the war broke

out she was actually engaged in reorganising the Sick Governesses' Institution in Harley Street, London. To her Mr. Sidney Herbert turned. He offered her, if she would accept the task he proposed, plenary authority over all the nurses, and an unlimited power of drawing on the Government for whatever she might think necessary to the success of her undertaking. Miss Nightingale accepted the task, and went out to Scutari accompanied by some women of rank like her own, and a trained staff of nurses. They speedily reduced chaos into order; and from the time of their landing in Scutari there was at least one department of the business of war which was never again a subject of complaint. The spirit of the chivalric days had been restored under better auspices for its abiding influence. Sidney Herbert, in his letter to Miss Nightingale, had said that her example, if she accepted the task he proposed, would 'multiply the good to all time.' These words proved to have no exaggeration in them. We have never seen a war since in which women of education and of genuine devotion have not given themselves up to the task of caring for the wounded. The Geneva Convention and the bearing of the Red Cross are among the results of Florence Nightingale's work in the Crimea.

But the siege of Sebastopol was meanwhile dragging heavily along; and sometimes it was not quite certain which ought to be called the besieged, the Russians in the city or the allies encamped in sight of it. During some months the armies did little or nothing. The commissariat system and the land transport system had broken down. The armies were miserably weakened by sickness. Cholera was ever and anon raging anew among our men. Horses and mules were dying of cold and starvation. The roads were only deep irregular ruts filled with mud; the camp was a marsh; the tents stood often in pools of water; the men had sometimes no beds but straw dripping with wet; and hardly any bed coverings. Our unfortunate Turkish allies were in a far more wretched plight than even we ourselves. The authorities who ought to have looked after them were impervious to the criticisms of special correspondents and unassailable by Parliamentary votes of censure. A condemnation of the latter kind was hanging over our Government. Parliament was called together before Christmas; and after the Christmas recess Mr. Roebuck gave notice that he would move for a select committee to inquire into the condition of the army

before Sebastopol, and into the conduct of those departments of the Government whose duty it had been to minister to the wants of the army. Lord John Russell did not believe for himself that the motion could be conscientiously resisted; but as it necessarily involved a censure upon some of his colleagues, he did not think he ought to remain longer in the Ministry, and he therefore resigned his office. The sudden resignation of the leader of the House of Commons was a death-blow to any plans of resistance by which the Government might otherwise have thought of encountering Mr. Roebuck's motion. Mr. Roebuck's motion came on, and was resisted with vigour by Lord Palmerston and Mr. Gladstone. The House of Commons was not to be moved by any such argument or appeal. The one pervading idea was that England had been endangered and shamed by the break-down of her army organisation. When the division took place 305 members voted for Mr. Roebuck's motion and only 148 against. The majority against Ministers was therefore 157. Everyone knows what a scene usually takes place when a Ministry is defeated in the House of Commons. Cheering again and again renewed, counter-cheers of defiance, wild exultation, vehement indignation, a whole whirlpool of various emotions, seething in that little hall in St. Stephen's. But this time there was no such outburst. The House could hardly realise the fact that the Ministry of all the talents had been thus completely and ignominiously defeated. A dead silence followed the announcement of the numbers. Then there was a half-breathless murmur of amazement and incredulity. The Speaker repeated the numbers, and doubt was over. It was still uncertain how the House would express its feelings. Suddenly someone laughed. The sound gave a direction and a relief to perplexed, pent-up emotion. Shouts of laughter followed. Not merely the pledged opponents of the Government laughed. Many of those who had voted with Ministers found themselves laughing too. It seemed so absurd, so incongruous, this way of disposing of the great Coalition Government. Many must have thought of the night of fierce debate, little more than two years before, when Mr. Disraeli, then on the verge of his fall from power and realising fully the strength of the combination against him, consoled his party and himself for the imminent fatality awaiting them by the defiant words, 'I know that I have to face a Coalition; the combination may be successful. A combination has before

this been successful; but coalitions, though they may be successful, have always found that their triumphs have been brief. This I know, that England does not love coalitions.' Only two years had passed and the great Coalition had fallen, overwhelmed with reproach and popular indignation, and amid sudden shouts of laughter.

Lord Derby was invited by the Queen to form a Government. He tried and failed. Palmerston did not see his way to join a Derby Administration, and without him Lord Derby could not go on. The Queen then sent for Lord John Russell; but Russell found that he could not get a Government together. Lord Palmerston was then, to use his own phrase, the inevitable. There was not much change in the Ministry. Lord Aberdeen was gone, and Lord Palmerston took his place; and Lord Panmure, who had formerly as Fox Maule administered the affairs of the army, succeeded the Duke of Newcastle. Lord Panmure, however, combined in his own person the functions, up to that time absurdly separated, of Secretary-at-War and Secretary-for-War. It was hoped that by this change great benefit would come to our whole army system. Lord Palmerston acted energetically too in sending out a sanitary commission to the Crimea, and a commission to superintend the commissariat, a department that, almost more than any other, had broken down. Lord Palmerston was strongly pressed by some of the more strenuous Reformers of the House. Mr. Layard, who had acquired some celebrity before in a very different field, as a discoverer, that is to say, in the ruins of Nineveh and Babylon, was energetic and incessant in his attacks on the administration of the war, and was not disposed even now to give the new Government a moment's rest. Mr. Layard was a man of a certain rough ability, immense self-sufficiency, and indomitable egotism. He was not in any sense an eloquent speaker; he was singularly wanting in all the graces of style and manner. But he was fluent, he was vociferous, he never seemed to have a moment's doubt on any conceivable question, he never admitted that there could by any possibility be two sides to any matter of discussion. He did really know a great deal about the East at a time when the habit of travelling in the East was comparatively rare. He stamped down all doubt or difference of view with the overbearing dogmatism of the proverbial man who has been there and ought to know; and he was in many respects admirably fitted to be the spokesman

of all those, and they were not a few, who saw that things had been going wrong without exactly seeing why, and were eager that something should be done, although they did not clearly know what. Lord Palmerston strove to induce the House not to press for the appointment of the committee recommended in Mr. Roebuck's motion. The Government, he said, would make the needful inquiries themselves. Mr. Roebuck, however, would not give way, and Lord Palmerston yielded to a demand which had undoubtedly the support of a vast force of public opinion, but his unavoidable concession brought on a new ministerial crisis. Sir James Graham, Mr. Gladstone, and Mr. Sidney Herbert declined to hold office any longer. They had opposed the motion for an inquiry most gravely and strenuously, and they would not lend any countenance to it by remaining in office. Sir Charles Wood succeeded Sir James Graham as First Lord of the Admiralty; Lord John Russell took the place of Secretary of the Colonies, vacated by Sidney Herbert; and Sir George Cornewall Lewis followed Mr. Gladstone as Chancellor of the Exchequer.

Meanwhile new negotiations for peace, set on foot under the influence of Austria, had been begun at Vienna, and Lord John Russell had been sent there to represent the interests of England. We had got a new ally in the little kingdom of Sardinia, whose government was then under the control of one of the master-spirits of modern politics, Count Cavour. Sardinia went into war in order that she might have a *locus standi* in the councils of Europe from which to set forth her grievances against Austria. The policy was singularly successful, and entirely justified the expectations of Cavour. The Crimean War laid the foundations of the kingdom of Italy. But there was another event of a very different nature, the effect of which seemed at first likely to be all in favour of peace. On March 2, 1855, the Emperor Nicholas of Russia died of pulmonary apoplexy, after an attack of influenza. A cartoon appeared in *Punch*, which was called 'General Février turned Traitor.' The Emperor Nicholas had boasted that Russia had two generals on whom she could always rely, General Janvier and General Février; and now the English artist represented General February, a skeleton in Russian uniform, turning traitor and laying his bony ice-cold hand on the heart of the Sovereign and betraying him to the tomb. But indeed it was not General February alone who doomed Nicholas to death. The Czar

died of broken hopes; of the recklessness that comes from defeat and despair. He took no precautions against cold and exposure; he treated with a magnanimous disdain the remonstrances of his physicians and his friends. The news of the sudden death of the Emperor created a profound sensation in England. At first there was, as we have said, a common impression that Nicholas's son and successor, Alexander II., would be more anxious to make peace than his father had been. But this hope was soon gone. The new Czar could not venture to show himself to his people in a less patriotic light than his predecessor. The prospects of the allies were at the time remarkably gloomy. There must have seemed to the new Russian Emperor considerable ground for the hope that disease, and cold, and bad management would do more harm to the army of England at least than any Russian general could do. The Conference at Vienna proved a failure. Lord John Russell, sent to Vienna as our representative, was charged by Mr. Disraeli with having encouraged the Russian pretensions. Sir E. B. Lytton gave notice of a direct vote of censure on 'the Minister charged with the negotiations at Vienna.' But Russell anticipated the certain effect of a vote in the House of Commons by resigning his office. The vote of censure was withdrawn. Sir William Molesworth, one of the most distinguished of the school who were since called Philosophical Radicals, succeeded him as Colonial Secretary; and the Ministry carried one or two triumphant votes against Mr. Disraeli, Mr. Roebuck, and other opponents, or at least unfriendly critics. Meanwhile the Emperor of the French and his wife had paid a visit to London, and had been received with considerable enthusiasm. The Queen seems to have been very favourably impressed by the Emperor. The Prince Consort seems to have been less impressed. The Prince Consort appears to have judged the Emperor almost exactly as impartial opinion has judged him everywhere in Europe since that time.

The operations in the Crimea were renewed with some vigour. The English army lost much by the death of its brave and manly Commander-in-Chief, Lord Raglan. He was succeeded by General Simpson, whose administration during the short time that he held the command was at least well qualified to keep Lord Raglan's memory green and to prevent the regret for his death from losing any of its keen-

ness. The French army had lost its first commander long before—the versatile, reckless, brilliant soldier of fortune, St. Arnaud. After St. Arnaud's death the command was transferred for a while to General Canrobert, who resigned it in favour of General Pélissier. The Sardinian contingent had arrived, and had given admirable proof of its courage and discipline. On August 16, 1855, the Russians, under General Liprandi, made an unsuccessful effort to raise the siege of Sebastopol by an attack on the allied forces. The Sardinian contingent bore themselves with stubborn bravery in the resistance, and all Northern Italy was thrown into wild delight by the news that the flag of Piedmont had been carried to victory over the troops of one great European Power, and side by side with those of two others. It was the first great illustration of Cavour's habitual policy of blended audacity and cool, far-seeing judgment. The siege had been progressing for some time with considerable activity. The Malakoff tower and the Mamelon battery in front of it became the scenes and the objects of constant struggle. The Russians made desperate night sorties again and again, and were always repulsed. On June 7 the English assaulted the quarries in front of the Redan, and the French attacked the Mamelon. The attack on both sides was successful; but it was followed on the 18th of the same month by a desperate and wholly unsuccessful attack on the Redan and Malakoff batteries. On September 5 the allies made an attack almost simultaneously upon the Malakoff and the Redan. The French soon got possession of the Malakoff, and the English then at once advanced upon the Redan; but the French were near the Malakoff; the English were very far away from the Redan. The distance our soldiers had to traverse left them almost helplessly exposed to the Russian fire. They stormed the parapets of the Redan despite all the difficulties of their attack; but they were not able to hold the place. The attacking party were far too small in numbers; reinforcements did not come in time; the English held their own for an hour against odds that might have seemed overwhelming; but it was simply impossible for them to establish themselves in the Redan, and the remnant of them that could withdraw had to retreat to the trenches. It was only the old story of the war. Superb courage and skill of the officers and men; outrageously bad generalship. The attack might have been renewed that day, but the English Commander-in-Chief, General Simpson,

resolved not to make another attempt till the next morning. Before the morrow came there was nothing to attack. The Russians withdrew during the night fron the south side of Sebastopol. A bridge of boats had been constructed across the bay to connect the north and the south sides of the city, and across this bridge Prince Gortschakoff quietly withdrew his troops. The Russian general felt that it would be impossible for him to hold the city much longer, and that to remain there was only useless waste of life. But, as he said in his own despatch, 'It is not Sebastopol which we have left to them, but the burning ruins of the town, which we ourselves set fire to, having maintained the honour of the defence in such a manner that our great-grandchildren may recall with pride the remembrance of it and send it on to all posterity.' It was some time before the allies could venture to enter the abandoned city. The arsenals and powder-magazines were exploding, the flames were bursting out of every public building and every private house. The Russians had made of Sebastopol another Moscow.

With the close of that long siege, which had lasted nearly a year, the war may be said to have ended. The brilliant episode of Kars, its splendid defence and its final surrender, was brought to its conclusion, indeed, after the fall of Sebastopol; but, although it naturally attracted peculiar attention in this country, it could have no effect on the actual fortunes of such a war. Kars was defended by Colonel Fenwick Williams, an English officer, who held the place against overwhelming Russian forces, and against an enemy far more appalling—starvation itself. He had to surrender at last to famine; but the very articles of surrender to which the conqueror consented became the trophy of Williams and his men. The garrison were allowed to leave the place with all the honours of war; and, 'as a testimony to the valorous resistance made by the garrison of Kars, the officers of all ranks are to keep their swords.' The war was virtually over. Austria had been exerting herself throughout its progress in the interests of peace, and after the fall of Sebastopol she made a new effort with greater success. France and Russia were indeed now anxious to be out of the struggle almost on any terms. If England had held out, it is highly probable that she would have had to do so alone. For this indeed Lord Palmerston was fully prepared as a last resource, sooner than submit to terms which he

considered unsatisfactory. The Congress of Paris opened on February 26, 1856, and on March 30 the treaty of peace was signed by the plenipotentiaries of the Great Powers. Prussia had been admitted to the Congress, which therefore represented England, France, Russia, Austria, Prussia, Turkey and Sardinia.

By the treaty Kars was restored to the Sultan, and Sebastopol and all other places taken by the allies were given back to Russia. The Great Powers engaged to respect the independence and territorial integrity of Turkey. The Sultan issued a firman for ameliorating the condition of his Christian subjects, and no right of interference, it was distinctly specified, was given to the other Powers by this concession on the Sultan's part. The Black Sea was neutralised; its waters and its ports were thrown open to the mercantile marine of every nation, and formally and in perpetuity interdicted to the flag of war either of the Powers possessing its coasts or of any other Power, with the exception of the right of each of the Powers to have the same number of small armed vessels in the Black Sea to act as a sort of maritime police and to protect the coasts. The Sultan and the Emperor engaged to establish and maintain no military or maritime arsenals in that sea. The navigation of the Danube was thrown open. Moldavia and Wallachia, continuing under the suzerainty of the Sultan, were to enjoy all the privileges and immunities they already possessed under the guarantee of the contracting Powers, but with no separate right of intervention in their affairs. Out of Moldavia and Wallachia united, after various internal changes, there subsequently grew the kingdom of Roumania. The existing position of Servia was secured by the treaty. During time of peace the Sultan engaged to admit no foreign ships of war into the Bosphorus or the Dardanelles.

To guarantee Turkey from the enemy they most feared a tripartite treaty was afterwards agreed to between England, France and Austria. This document bears date in Paris April 15, 1856; by it the contracting parties guaranteed jointly and severally the independence and integrity of the Ottoman empire, and declared that any infraction of the general treaty of March 30 would be considered by them as *casus belli*. The Congress of Paris was remarkable for the fact that the plenipotentiaries before separating came to an agreement on the rules generally of maritime war by which privateering was abolished. It was agreed, however, that the rules adopted at the Congress of Paris

should only be binding on those States that had acceded or should accede to them. The United States raised some difficulty about renouncing the right of privateering, and the declarations of the Congress were therefore made without America's assenting to them. At the instigation of Count Cavour the condition of Italy was brought before the Congress; and there can be no doubt that out of the Congress and the part that Sardinia assumed as representative of Italian nationality came the succession of events which ended in the establishment of a King of Italy in the palace of the Quirinal. The adjustment of the condition of the Danubian principalities too engaged much attention and discussion, and a highly ingenious arrangement was devised for the purpose of keeping those provinces from actual union, so that they might be coherent enough to act as a rampart against Russia, without being so coherent as to cause Austria any alarm for her own somewhat disjointed, not to say distracted, political system. All these artificial and complex arrangements presently fell to pieces, and the principalities became in course of no very long time an united independent State under a hereditary Prince. But for the hour it was hoped that the independence of Turkey and the restriction of Russia, the security of the Christian provinces, the neutrality of the Black Sea, and the closing of the Straits against war vessels, had been bought by the war.

England lost some twenty-four thousand men in the war, of whom hardly a sixth fell in battle or died of wounds. Cholera and other diseases gave grim account of the rest. Forty-one millions of money were added by the campaign to the National Debt. England became involved in a quarrel with the United States because of our Foreign Enlistment Act. At the close of December 1854 Parliament hurriedly passed an Act authorising the formation of a Foreign Legion for service in the war, and some Swiss and Germans were recruited who never proved of the slightest service. Prussia and America both complained that the zeal of our recruiting functionaries outran the limits of discretion and of law. One of our consuls was actually put on trial at Cologne: and America made a serious complaint of the enlistment of her citizens. England apologised; but the United States were out of temper, and insisted on sending our minister, Mr. Crampton, away from Washington, and some little time passed before the friendly relations of the two States were completely restored.

There was a feeling of disappointment in this country at the close of the war. Our soldiers had done splendidly; but our generals and our system had done poorly indeed. Only one first-class reputation of a military order had come out of the war, and that was by the common consent of the world awarded to a Russian—to General Todleben, the defender of Sebastopol. No new name was made on our side or on that of the French; and some promising or traditional reputations were shattered. The political results of the war were to many minds equally unsatisfying. Lord Aberdeen estimated that it might perhaps secure peace in the East of Europe for some twenty-five years. His modest expectation was prophetic. Indeed it a little overshot the mark. Twenty-two years after the close of the Crimean campaign Russia and Turkey were at war again.

CHAPTER XII.

THE LORCHA 'ARROW.'—TRANSPORTATION.

After the supposed settlement of the Eastern Question at the Congress of Paris, a sort of languor seems to have come over Parliament and the public mind in England. Lord John Russell proposed a series of resolutions to establish in England a genuine system of national education, which were of course rejected by the House of Commons. Public opinion, both in and out of Parliament, was not nearly ripe for such a principle then. One of the regular attempts to admit the Jews to Parliament was made, and succeeded in the House of Commons, to fail, as usual, in the House of Lords. The House of Lords itself was thrown into great perturbation for a time by the proposal of the Government to confer a peerage for life on one of the judges, Sir James Parke. Lord Lyndhurst strongly opposed the proposal, on the ground that it was the beginning of an attempt to introduce a system of life-peerages, which would destroy the ancient and hereditary character of the House of Lords. The Government, who had really no reactionary or revolutionary designs in their mind, settled the matter for the time by creating Sir James Parke Baron Wensleydale in the usual way, and the object they had in view was quietly

accomplished many years later, when the appellate jurisdiction of the Lords was remodelled.

Sir George Lewis was Chancellor of the Exchequer. He was as yet not credited with anything like the political ability which he afterwards proved that he possessed. It was the fashion to regard him as a mere bookman, who had drifted somehow into Parliament, and who, in the temporary absence of available talent, had been thrust into the office lately held by Mr. Gladstone. The contrast indeed between the style of his speaking and that of Mr. Gladstone or Mr. Disraeli was enough to dishearten any political assembly. Sir George Lewis began by being nearly inaudible, and continued to the last to be oppressed by the most ineffective and unattractive manner and delivery. But it began to be gradually found out that the monotonous, halting, feeble manner covered a very remarkable power of expression; that the speaker had great resources of argument, humour, and illustration; that every sentence contained some fresh idea or some happy expression. After a while the capacity of Lewis ran the risk of being overrated quite as much as it had been undervalued before.

For the present, however, Sir George Lewis was regarded only as the sort of statesman whom it was fitting to have in office just then; the statesman of an interval, in whom no one was expected to take any particular interest. The attention of the public was a good deal distracted from political affairs by the failure and frauds of the Royal British Bank and other frauds, which gave for the time a sort of idea that the financial principles of the country were crumbling to pieces. The culmination of the extraordinary career of John Sadleir was fresh in public memory. This man was the organiser and guiding spirit of the Irish Brigade, a gang of adventurers who got into Parliament and traded on the genuine grievances of their country to get power and money for themselves. John Sadleir embezzled, swindled, forged, and finally escaped justice by committing suicide on Hampstead Heath. The brother of Sadleir was expelled from the House of Commons; one of his accomplices, who had obtained a Government appointment and had embezzled money, contrived to make his escape to the United States; and the Irish Brigade was broken up. It is only just to say that the best representatives of the Irish Catholics and the Irish national party, in and out of Parliament, had never from the first believed in Sadleir and his band, and had made persistent efforts to expose them.

About this same time Mr. Cyrus W. Field, an energetic American merchant, came over to this country to explain to its leading merchants and scientific men a plan he had for constructing an electric telegraph line underneath the Atlantic. He was listened to with polite curiosity. Mr. Field had, however, a much better reception on the whole than M. de Lesseps, who came to England a few months later to explain his project for constructing a ship canal across the Isthmus of Suez. His proposal was received with coldness, and more than coldness, by engineers, capitalists, and politicians.

The political world seemed to have made up its mind for a season of quiet. Suddenly a storm broke out. The Speech from the Throne at the opening of Parliament, on February 3, 1857, stated that acts of violence, insults to the British flag, and infraction of treaty rights, committed by the local Chinese authorities at Canton, and a pertinacious refusal of redress, had rendered it necessary for her Majesty's officers in China to have recourse to measures of force to obtain satisfaction. The alleged offences of the Chinese authorities at Canton had for their single victim the lorcha *Arrow*. The lorcha *Arrow* was a small boat built on the European model. The word 'Lorcha' is taken from the Portuguese settlement at Macao at the mouth of the Canton river. It often occurs in treaties with the Chinese authorities. On October 8, 1856, a party of Chinese in charge of an officer boarded the *Arrow*, in the Canton river. They took off twelve men on a charge of piracy, leaving two men in charge of the lorcha. The *Arrow* was declared by its owners to be a British vessel. Our Consul at Canton, Mr. Parkes, demanded from Yeh, the Chinese Governor of Canton, the return of the men, basing his demand upon the Treaty of 1843, supplemental to the Treaty of 1842. This treaty did not give the Chinese authorities any right to seize Chinese offenders, or supposed offenders, on board an English vessel. It merely gave them a right to require the surrender of the offenders at the hands of the English. The Chinese Governor, Yeh, contended, however, that the lorcha was a Chinese pirate vessel, which had no right whatever to hoist the flag of England. It may be plainly stated at once that the *Arrow* was not an English vessel, but only a Chinese vessel which had obtained by false pretences the temporary possession of a British flag. Mr. Consul Parkes, however, was fussy, and he

demanded the instant restoration of the captured men, and he sent off to our Plenipotentiary at Hong Kong, Sir John Bowring, for authority and assistance in the business.

Sir John Bowring was a man of considerable ability. At one time he seemed to be a candidate for something like fame. He had a very large and varied knowledge of European and Asiatic languages, he had travelled a great deal, and had sat in Parliament for some years. He understood political economy, and had a good knowledge of trade and commerce. He had many friends and admirers, and he set up early for a sort of great man. He was full of self-conceit, and without any very clear idea of political principles on the large scale. Bowring had been Consul for some years at Canton, and he had held the post of chief superintendent of trade there. It would seem as if his eager self-conceit would not allow him to resist the temptation to display himself on the field of political action as a great English plenipotentiary bidding England be of good cheer and compelling inferior races to grovel in the dust before her. He ordered the Chinese authorities to surrender all the men taken from the *Arrow*, and he insisted that an apology should be offered for their arrest, and a formal pledge given by the Chinese authorities that no such act should ever be committed again. If this were not done within forty-eight hours, naval operations were to be begun against the Chinese. The Chinese Governor, Yeh, sent back all the men, and undertook to promise that for the future great care should be taken that no British ship should be visited improperly by Chinese officers. But he could not offer an apology for the particular case of the *Arrow*, for he still maintained, as was indeed the fact, that the *Arrow* was a Chinese vessel, and that the English had nothing to do with her. Accordingly Sir John Bowring carried out his threat, and had Canton bombarded by the fleet which Admiral Sir Michael Seymour commanded. From October 23 to November 13 naval and military operations were kept up continuously. Commissioner Yeh retaliated by foolishly offering a reward for the head of every Englishman.

This news from China created a considerable sensation in England. On February 24, 1857, Lord Derby brought forward in the House of Lords a motion, comprehensively condemning the whole of the proceedings of the British authorities in China. The debate would have been memorable if only for the powerful speech in which the venerable Lord Lynd-

hurst supported the motion, and exposed the utter illegality of the course pursued by Sir John Bowring. The House of Lords rejected the motion of Lord Derby by a majority of 146 to 110. On February 26 Mr. Cobden brought forward a similar motion in the House of Commons. This must have been a peculiarly painful task for Mr. Cobden. He was an old friend of Sir John Bowring, with whom he had always supposed himself to have many or most opinions in common. But he followed his convictions as to public duty in despite of his personal friendship. The debate was remarkable more for the singular political combination which it developed as it went on, than even for its varied ability and eloquence. Men spoke and voted on the same side who had probably never been brought into such companionship before and never were afterwards. Mr. Cobden found himself supported by Mr. Gladstone and Mr. Disraeli, by Mr. Roebuck and Sir E. B. Lytton, by Lord John Russell and Mr. Whiteside, by Lord Robert Cecil, afterwards the Marquis of Salisbury, Sir Frederick Thesiger, Mr. Roundell Palmer, afterwards Lord Selborne, Mr. Sidney Herbert, and Mr. Milner Gibson. Mr. Cobden had probably never dreamed of the amount or the nature of the support his motion was destined to receive. The vote of censure was carried by 263 votes against 247—a majority of 16.

Lord Palmerston announced two or three days after that the Government had resolved on a dissolution and an appeal to the country. Lord Palmerston understood his countrymen. He knew that a popular Minister makes himself more popular by appealing to the country on the ground that he has been condemned by the House of Commons for upholding the honour of England and coercing some foreign power somewhere. In his address to the electors of Tiverton he declared that an insolent barbarian, wielding authority at Canton, violated the British flag, broke the engagements of treaties, offered rewards for the heads of British subjects in that part of China, and planned their destruction by murder, assassination, and poison. That of course was all-sufficient. The 'insolent barbarian' was in itself almost enough. Governor Yeh certainly was not a barbarian. His argument on the subject of International Law obtained the endorsement of Lord Lyndhurst. His way of arguing the political and commercial case compelled the admiration of Lord Derby. His letters form a curious contrast to the documents contributed

to the controversy by the representatives of British authority in China. However, he became for electioneering purposes an insolent barbarian; and the story of a Chinese baker who was said to have tried to poison Sir John Bowring was transfigured into an attempt at the wholesale poisoning of Englishmen in China by the express orders of the Chinese Governor. Lord Palmerston's victory was complete. Cobden, Bright, Milner Gibson, W. J. Fox, Layard, and many other leading opponents of the Chinese policy, were left without seats. Lord Palmerston came back to power with renewed and redoubled strength. A little war with Persia came to an end in time to give him another claim as a conqueror on the sympathies of the constituencies. In the Royal Speech at the opening of Parliament it was announced that the differences between this country and China still remained unadjusted, and that therefore her Majesty had sent to China a Plenipotentiary who would be supported by an adequate naval and military force if necessary. The Government, however, had more serious business with which to occupy themselves before they were at liberty to turn to the easy work of coercing the Chinese.

The new Parliament was engaged for some time in passing the Act abolishing the ancient jurisdiction of the ecclesiastical courts respecting divorce, and setting up a regular court of law, the Divorce and Matrimonial Causes Court, to deal with questions between husband and wife. The passing of the Divorce Act was strongly contested in both Houses of Parliament, and indeed was secured at last only by Lord Palmerston's intimating very significantly that he would keep the Houses sitting until the measure had been disposed of. Mr. Gladstone, in particular, offered to the bill a most strenuous opposition.

The year 1857 saw the abolition of the system of transportation. Transportation as a means of getting rid of part of our criminal population dates from the time of Charles II., when the judges gave power for the removal of offenders to the North American colonies. It was first regularly introduced into our criminal law in 1717, by an Act of Parliament. In 1787 a cargo of criminals was shipped out to Botany Bay, on the eastern shore of New South Wales, and near Sydney, the present thriving capital of the colony. Afterwards the convicts were also sent to Van Diemen's Land, or Tasmania; and to Norfolk Island, a lonely island in the Pacific, some eight hundred miles from the New South Wales shore. Norfolk

Island became the penal settlement for the convicted among convicts; that is to say, criminals who, after transportation to New South Wales, committed new crimes there, might be sent by the Colonial authorities for sterner punishment to Norfolk Island. It looked as if the system ought to be satisfactory in every way and to everybody. The convicts were provided with a new career, a new country, and a chance of reformation. They were usually after a while released from actual durance in the penal settlement, and allowed conditionally to find employment, and to make themselves, if they could, good citizens. Their labour, it was thought, would be of great service to the colonists. But the colonists very soon began to complain. The convicts who had spent their period of probation in hulks or prisons generally left those homes of horror with nature so brutalised as to make their intrusion into any community of decent persons an insufferable nuisance. Pent up in penal settlements by themselves, the convicts turned into demons; drafted into an inhabited colony, they were too numerous to be wholly absorbed by the population, and they carried their contagion along with them. New South Wales and Tasmania began to protest against being made the refuse-ground for our scoundrelism. Only in Western Australia were the people willing to receive them on any conditions, and Western Australia had but scanty natural resources and could in any case harbour very few of our outcasts. The discovery of gold in Australia settled the question of those colonies being troubled any more with our transportation system; for the greatest enthusiast for transportation would hardly propose to send out gangs of criminals to a region glowing with the temptations of gold.

The question then arose what was England to do with the criminals whom up to that time she had been able to shovel out of her way. All the receptacles were closed but Western Australia, and that counted for almost nothing. In 1853 a bill was brought in by the Ministry to substitute penal servitude for transportation, unless in cases where the sentence was for fourteen years and upwards. The bill reduced the scale of punishment; that is to say, made a shorter period of penal servitude supply the place of a longer term of transportation. Lord Palmerston was Home Secretary at this time. It was during the passing of the bill through the House of Lords that Lord Grey suggested the introduction of a modification of the ticket-of-leave system which was in practice in the colonies. The principle of the ticket-of-leave was that the convict should

not be kept in custody during the whole period of his sentence, but that he should be allowed to pass through a period of conditional liberty before he obtained his full and unrestricted freedom. Now there can be no doubt that the principle of the ticket-of-leave is excellent. But it proved on its first trial in this country the most utter delusion. It got no fair chance at all. It was understood by the whole English public that the object of the ticket-of-leave was to enable the authorities to give a conditional discharge from custody to a man who had in some way proved his fitness for such a relaxation of punishment, and that the eye of the police would be on him even during the period of his conditional release. This was in fact the construction put on the Act in Ireland, where accordingly the ticket-of-leave system was worked with the most complete success under the management of Sir Walter Crofton, chairman of the Board of Prison Directors. A man who had Sir Walter Crofton's ticket-of-leave was known by that very fact to have given earnest of good purpose and steady character. The system in Ireland was therefore all that its authors could have wished it to be. But for some inscrutable reason the Act was interpreted in this country as simply giving every convict a right, after a certain period of detention, to claim a ticket-of-leave, provided he had not grossly violated any of the regulations of the prison or misconducted himself in some outrageous manner.

It would be superfluous to examine the working of such a system. A number of scoundrels whom the judges had sentenced to be kept in durance for so many years were without any conceivable reason turned loose upon society long before the expiration of their sentence. They were in England literally turned loose upon society, for it was held by the authorities here that it might possibly interfere with the chance of a gaol-bird's getting employment, if he were seen to be watched by the police. The police therefore were considerately ordered to refrain from looking after them. Fifty per cent. of the ruffians released on ticket-of-leave were afterwards brought up for new crimes, and convicted over again. Of those who although not actually convicted were believed to have relapsed into their old habits, from sixty to seventy per cent. relapsed within the first year of their liberation. Baron Bramwell stated from the bench that he had had instances of criminals coming before him who had three sentences overlapping each other. The convict was set free

on ticket-of-leave, convicted of some new crime, and re-committed to prison; released again on ticket-of-leave, and convicted once again, before the period of his original sentence had expired. An alarm sprang up in England. The result of the public alarm and the Parliamentary reconsideration of the whole subject was the bill brought in by Sir George Grey in 1857. This measure extended the provisions of the Act of 1853 by substituting in all cases a sentence of penal servitude for one of transportation, abolished the old-fashioned transportation system altogether, but it left the power to the authorities to have penal servitude carried out in any of the colonies where it might be thought expedient. The Government had still some idea of utilising Western Australia for some of our offenders. But nothing came of this plan, or of the clause in the new Act which was passed to favour it; and as a matter of fact transportation was abolished. How the amended legislation worked in other respects we shall have an opportunity of examining hereafter.

The Gretna Green marriages became illegal in 1857, their doom having been fixed for that time by an Act passed in the previous session. Thenceforward such marriages were unlawful, unless one of the parties had lived at least twenty-one days previously in Scotland.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE INDIAN MUTINY.

In May 1857 the great Indian Mutiny shook to its foundations the whole fabric of British rule in Hindostan. Throughout the greater part of the north and north-west of the great Indian peninsula there was a rebellion of the native races against English power. It was not by any means a merely military mutiny. It was a combination of military grievance, national hatred and religious fanaticism, against the English occupiers of India. The native princes and the native soldiers were in it. The Mohammedan and the Hindoo forgot their own religious antipathies to join against the Christian. Let us first see what were the actual facts of the outbreak. When the improved (Enfield) rifle was introduced into the Indian army in 1856, the idea got abroad that the cartridges were made up in paper greased with a mixture of cow's fat

and hog's lard. It appears that the paper was actually greased, but not with any such material as that which religious alarm suggested to the native troops. Now a mixture of cow's fat and hog's lard would have been, above all things, unsuitable for use in cartridges to be distributed among our Sepoys; for the Hindoo regards the cow with religious veneration, and the Mohammedan looks upon the hog with utter loathing. In the mind of the former something sacred to him was profaned; in that of the latter something unclean and abominable was forced upon his daily use. Various efforts were made to allay the panic among the native troops. The use of the cartridges complained of was discontinued by orders issued in January 1857. The Governor-General sent out a proclamation in the following May, assuring the army of Bengal that the tales told to them of offence to their religion or injury to their caste being meditated by the Government of India were all malicious inventions and falsehoods. Still the idea was strong among the troops that some design against their religion was meditated. A mutinous spirit began to spread itself abroad. In March some of the native regiments had to be disbanded. In April some executions of Sepoys took place for gross and open mutiny. In the same month several of the native Bengal cavalry in Meerut refused to use the cartridges served out to them, although they had been authoritatively assured that the paper in which the cartridges were wrapped had never been touched by any offensive material. On May 9 these men were sent to the gaol. They had been tried by court-martial, and were sentenced, eighty of them, to imprisonment and hard labour for ten years, the remaining five to a similar punishment for six years. They had chains put on them in the presence of their comrades, who no doubt regarded them as martyrs to their religious faith, and they were thus publicly marched off to the common gaol. The guard placed over the gaol actually consisted of Sepoys.

The following day, Sunday, May 10, was memorable. The native troops in Meerut broke into open mutiny. They fired upon their officers, killed a colonel and others, broke into the gaol, released their comrades, and massacred several of the European inhabitants. The European troops rallied and drove them from their cantonments or barracks. Then came the momentous event, the turning point of the mutiny: the act that marked out its character, and made it what it afterwards became. Meerut is an important military station

between the Ganges and the Jumna, thirty-eight miles north-east from Delhi. In the vast palace of Delhi, almost a city in itself, lived the aged King of Delhi, as he was called; the disestablished, but not wholly disendowed, sovereign, the descendant of the great Timour, the last representative of the Grand Mogul. The mutineers fled along the road to Delhi; and some evil fate directed that they were not to be pursued or stopped on their way. Unchecked, unpursued, they burst into Delhi, and swarmed into the precincts of the palace of the king. They claimed his protection; they insisted upon his accepting their cause and themselves. They proclaimed him Emperor of India, and planted the standard of rebellion against English rule on the battlements of his palace. They had found in one moment a leader, a flag and a cause, and the Mutiny was transfigured into a revolutionary war. The Sepoy troops, in the city and the cantonments on the Delhi ridge, two miles off, and overlooking the city, at once began to cast in their lot with the mutineers. The poor old puppet whom they set up as their emperor was a feeble creature, some eighty years of age. He had long been merely a pensioner of the East India Company. But he was the representative of the great dynasty whose name and effigies had been borne by all the coin of India until some twenty years before. He stood for legitimacy and divine right; and he supplied all the various factions and sects of which the mutiny was composed, or to be composed, with a visible and an acceptable head. If the mutineers flying from Meerut had been promptly pursued and dispersed, or captured, before they reached Delhi, the tale we have to tell might have been shorter and very different. But when they reached, unchecked, the Jumna glittering in the morning light, when they swarmed across the bridge of boats that spanned it, and when at length they clamoured under the windows of the palace that they had come to restore the rule of the Delhi dynasty, they had all unconsciously seized one of the great critical moments of history, and converted a military mutiny into a national and religious war.

This is the manner in which the Indian Rebellion began and assumed its distinct character. Mutinies were not novelties in India. There had been some very serious outbreaks before the time of the greased cartridges. But there was a combination of circumstances at work to bring about this revolt which affected variously but at once the army, the princes, and the populations of India. Let us speak first of

the army. The Bengal army was very different in its constitution and conditions from that of Bombay or Madras, the other great divisions of Indian Government at that time. In the Bengal army, the Hindoo Sepoys were far more numerous than the Mohammedans, and were chiefly Brahmins of high caste; while in Madras and Bombay the army was made up, as the Bengal regiments are now, of men of all sects and races without discrimination. Until the very year before the Mutiny the Bengal soldier was only enlisted for service in India, and was exempted from any liability to be sent across the seas; across the black water which the Sepoy dreaded and hated to have to cross. No such exemption was allowed to the soldiers of Bombay or Madras; and in July 1856 an order was issued by the military authorities to the effect that future enlistments in Bengal should be for service anywhere without limitation. Thus the Bengal Sepoy had not only been put in the position of a privileged and pampered favourite, but he had been subjected to the indignity and disappointment of seeing his privileges taken away from him.

But we must above all other things take into account, when considering the position of the Hindoo Sepoy, the influence of the tremendous institution of caste. An Englishman or European of any country will have to call his imaginative faculties somewhat vigorously to his aid in order to get even an idea of the power of this monstrous superstition. The man who by the merest accident, by the slightest contact with anything that defiled, had lost caste, was excommunicated from among the living, and was held to be for ever more accurst of God. His dearest friend, his nearest relation shrank back from him in alarm and abhorrence. Now, it had become from various causes a strong suspicion in the mind of the Sepoy that there was a deliberate purpose in the minds of the English rulers of the country to defile the Hindoos, and to bring them all to the dead level of one caste or no caste. No doubt there was in many instances a lack of consideration shown for the Hindoo's peculiar and very perplexing tenets. To many a man fresh from the ways of England, the Hindoo doctrines and practices appeared so ineffably absurd that he could not believe any human beings were serious in their devotion to them, and he took no pains to conceal his opinion as to the absurdity of the creed, and the hypocrisy of those who professed it. Some of the elder officers and civilians were imbued very strongly with a conviction that the work of open proselytism was part of their

duty; and in the best faith and with the purest intentions they thus strengthened the growing suspicion that the mind of the authorities was set on the defilement of the Hindoos. Nor was it among the Hindoos alone that the alarm began to be spread abroad. It was the conviction of the Mohammedans that their faith and their rites were to be tampered with as well. It was whispered among them everywhere that the peculiar baptismal custom of the Mohammedans was to be suppressed by law, and Mohammedan women were to be compelled to go unveiled in public. The slightest alterations in any system gave fresh confirmation to the suspicions that were afloat among the Hindoos and Mussulmans. When a change was made in the arrangements of the prisons, and the native prisoners were no longer allowed to cook for themselves, a murmur went abroad that this was the first overt act in the conspiracy to destroy the caste, and with it the bodies and souls of the Hindoos. Another change must be noticed too. At one time it was intended that the native troops should be commanded for the most part by native officers. The men would, therefore, have had something like sufficient security that their religious scruples were regarded and respected. But by degrees the natives were shouldered out of the high positions, until at length it became practically an army of native rank and file commanded by Englishmen. If we remember that a Hindoo sergeant of lower caste would, when off parade, often abase himself with his forehead in the dust before a Sepoy private who belonged to the Brahmin order, we shall have some idea of the perpetual collision between military discipline and religious principle which affected the Hindoo members of an army almost exclusively commanded by Europeans and Christians.

We have spoken of the army and of its religious scruples; we must now speak of the territorial and political influences which affected the princes and the populations of India. Lord Dalhousie had not long left India on the appointment of Lord Canning to the Governor-Generalship when the Mutiny broke out. Lord Dalhousie was a man of commanding energy, of indomitable courage, with the intellect of a ruler of men, and the spirit of a conqueror. He was undoubtedly a great man. He had had some Parliamentary experience in England and in both Houses; and he had been Vice-President and subsequently President of the Board of Trade under Sir Robert Peel. He had taken great interest in the framing of regulations for the railway legislation of the mania season

of 1844 and 1845. Towards the close of 1847 Lord Dalhousie was sent out to India. Never was there in any country an administration of more successful activity than that of Lord Dalhousie. He introduced cheap postage into India; he made railways; he set up lines of electric telegraph. He devoted much of his attention to irrigation, to the making of great roads, to the work of the Ganges Canal. He was the founder of a comprehensive system of native education. He put down infanticide, the Thug system, and he carried out with vigour Lord William Bentinck's Act for the suppression of the Suttee or burning of widows on the funeral pile of their husbands. But Lord Dalhousie was not wholly engaged in such works as these. During his few years of office he annexed the Punjaub; he incorporated part of the Burmese territory in our dominions; he annexed Nagpore, Sattara, Jhansi, Berar and Oudh. In the Punjaub the annexation was provoked by the murder of some of our officers, sanctioned, if not actually ordered, by a native prince. Lord Dalhousie marched a force into the Punjaub. This land, the 'land of the five waters,' lies at the gateway of Hindostan, and was peopled by Mussulmans, Hindoos, and Sikhs, the latter a new sect of reformed Hindoos. We found arrayed against us not only the Sikhs but our old enemies the Afghans. Lord Gough was in command of our forces. He fought rashly and disastrously the famous battle of Chillianwallah: he was defeated. But he wholly recovered his position by the complete defeat which he inflicted upon the enemy at Goojrat. Never was a victory more complete in itself or more promptly and effectively followed up. The Sikhs were crushed; the Afghans were driven in wild rout back across their savage passes; and Lord Dalhousie annexed the Punjaub. He presented as one token of his conquest the famous diamond, the Koh-i-noor, surrendered in evidence of submission by the Maharajah of Lahore, to the Crown of England.

Lord Dalhousie annexed Oudh on the ground that the East India Company had bound themselves to defend the sovereigns of Oudh against foreign and domestic enemies on condition that the State should be governed in such a manner as to render the lives and property of its population safe; and that while the Company performed their part of the contract, the King of Oudh so governed his dominions as to make his rule a curse to his own people, and to all neighbouring territories. Other excuses or justifications there were of course in the case of each other annexation; and we shall yet hear some more of

what came of the annexation of Sattara and Jhansi. If, however, each of these acts of policy were not only justifiable but actually inevitable, none the less must a succession of such acts produce a profound emotion among the races in whose midst they were accomplished. The populations of India became stricken with alarm as they saw their native princes thus successively dethroned. The subversion of thrones, the annexation of states, seemed to them naturally enough to form part of that vast scheme for rooting out all the religions and systems of India, concerning which so many vague forebodings had darkly warned the land. Many of our Sepoys came from Oudh and other annexed territories, and little reason as they might have had for any personal attachment to the subverted dynasties, they yet felt that national resentment which any manner of foreign intervention is almost certain to provoke.

There were peculiar reasons too why, if religious and political distrust did prevail, the moment of Lord Canning's accession to the supreme authority in India should seem inviting and favourable for schemes of sedition. The Afghan war had told the Sepoy that British troops are not absolutely invincible in battle. The impression produced almost everywhere in India by the Crimean war was a conviction that the strength of England was on the wane. The Sepoy saw that the English force in Northern India was very small ; and he really believed that it was small because England had no more men to send there. In his mind Russia was the great rising and conquering country ; England was sinking into decay ; her star waning before the strong glare of the portentous northern light. Moreover Lord Canning had hardly assumed office as Governor-General of India, when the dispute occurred between the British and Chinese authorities at Canton, and almost at the same moment war was declared against Persia by proclamation of the Governor-General at Calcutta, in consequence of the Shah having marched an army into Herat and besieged it, in violation of a treaty with Great Britain made in 1853. A body of troops was sent from Bombay to the Persian Gulf, and shortly after General Outram left Bombay with additional troops, as Commander-in-Chief of the field force in Persia. Therefore, in the opening days of 1857, it was known among the native populations of India that the East India Company was at war with Persia and that England had on her hands a quarrel with China. The native army of the three Presidencies

taken together was nearly three hundred thousand, while the Europeans were but forty-three thousand, of whom some five thousand had just been told off for duty in Persia. It must be owned that, given the existence of a seditious spirit, it would have been hardly possible for it to find conditions more seemingly favourable and tempting. There can be no doubt that a conspiracy for the subversion of the English government in India was afoot during the early days of 1857, and possibly for long before. The story of the mysterious *chupatties* is well known. The chupatties are small cakes of unleavened bread, and they were found to be distributed with amazing rapidity and precision of system at one time throughout the native villages of the north and north-west. In no instance were they distributed among the populations of still-existing native States. They were only sent among the villages over which English rule extended. A native messenger brought two of these mysterious cakes to the watchman or headman of a village, and bade him to have others prepared like them, and to pass them on to another place. There could be no doubt that the chupatties conveyed a warning to all who received them that something strange was about to happen, and bade them to be prepared for whatever might befall.

The news of the outbreak at Meerut, and the proclamation in Delhi, broke upon Calcutta with the shock of a thunder clap. For one or two days Calcutta was a prey to mere panic. The alarm was greatly increased by the fact that the dethroned King of Oudh was living near to the city, at Garden Reach, a few miles down the Hooghly. The inhabitants of Calcutta, when the news of the Mutiny came, were convinced that the palace of the King of Oudh was the head-quarters of rebellion, and were expecting the moment when, from the residence at Garden Reach, an organised army of murderers was to be sent forth to capture and destroy the ill-fated city, and to make its streets run with the blood of its massacred inhabitants. Lord Canning took the prudent course of having the king with his prime minister removed to the Governor-General's own residence within the precincts of Fort William. If ever the crisis found the man, Lord Canning was the man called for by that crisis in India. He had all the divining genius of the true statesman; the man who can rise to the height of some unexpected and new emergency; and he had the cool courage of a practised conqueror. Among all the

distracting counsels and wild stories poured in upon him from every side, he kept his mind clear. He never gave way either to anger or to alarm. If he ever showed a little impatience, it was only where panic would too openly have proclaimed itself by counsels of wholesale cruelty. He could not, perhaps, always conceal from frightened people the fact that he rather despised their terrors. Throughout the whole of that excited period there were few names, even among the chiefs of rebellion, on which fiercer denunciation was showered by Englishmen than the name of Lord Canning. Because he would not listen to the bloodthirsty clamours of mere frenzy, he was nicknamed 'Clemency Canning,' as if clemency were an attribute of which a man ought to be ashamed. Indeed, for some time people wrote and spoke, not merely in India but in England, as if clemency were a thing to be reprobated, like treason or crime. For a while it seemed a question of patriotism which would propose the most savage and sanguinary measures of revenge. Mr. Disraeli, to do him justice, raised his voice in remonstrance against the wild passions of the hour, even when these passions were strongest and most general. He declared that if such a temper were encouraged we ought to take down from our altars the image of Christ and raise the statue of Moloch there. If people were so carried away in England, where the danger was far remote, we can easily imagine what were the fears and passions roused in India, where the terror was or might be at the door of everyone. Lord Canning was gravely embarrassed by the wild urgencies and counsels of distracted Englishmen, who were furious with him because he even thought of distinguishing friend from foe where native races were concerned. But he bore himself with perfect calmness. He was greatly assisted and encouraged in his counsels by his brave and noble wife, who proved herself in every way worthy to be the helpmate of such a man at such a crisis. He did not for a moment under-estimate the danger; but neither did he exaggerate its importance. He never allowed it to master him. He looked upon it with the quiet, resolute eye of one who is determined to be the conqueror in the struggle.

Lord Canning saw that the one important thing was to strike at Delhi, which had proclaimed itself the head-quarters of the rebellion. He knew that English troops were on their way to China for the purpose of wreaking the wrongs of

English subjects there, and he took on his own responsibility the bold step of intercepting them, and calling them to the work of helping to put down the Mutiny in India. The dispute with China he thought could well afford to wait, but with the Mutiny it must be now or never. India could not wait for reinforcements brought all the way from England. Lord Canning knew well enough, as well as the wildest alarmist could know, that the rebel flag must be forced to fly from some field before that help came, or it would fly over the dead bodies of those who then represented English authority in India. He had, therefore, no hesitation in appealing to Lord Elgin, the Envoy in charge of the Chinese expedition, to stop the troops that were on their way to China, and lend them to the service of India at such a need. Lord Elgin had the courage and the wisdom to assent to the appeal at once. Fortune, too, was favourable to Canning in more ways than one. The Persian war was of short duration. Sir James Outram was soon victorious, and Outram, therefore, and his gallant companions, Colonel Jacob and Colonel Havelock, were able to lend their invaluable services to the Governor-General of India. Most important for Lord Canning's purposes was the manner in which the affairs of the Punjaub were managed at this crisis. The Punjaub was under the administration of one of the ablest public servants India has ever had—Sir John, afterwards Lord Lawrence. John Lawrence had from his youth been in the Civil Service of the East India Company; and when Lord Dalhousie annexed the Punjaub, he made Lawrence and his soldier-brother—the gallant Sir Henry Lawrence—two out of a board of three for the administration of the affairs of the newly-acquired province. Afterwards Sir John Lawrence was named the Chief Commissioner of the Punjaub, and by the promptitude and energy of himself and his subordinates, the province was completely saved for English rule at the outbreak of the Mutiny. Fortunately, the electric telegraph extended from Calcutta to Lahore, the chief city of the Punjaub. On May 11 the news of the outbreak at Meerut was brought to the authorities at Lahore. As it happened, Sir John Lawrence was then away at Rawul Pindee, in the Upper Punjaub; but Mr. Robert Montgomery, the Judicial Commissioner at Lahore, was invested with plenary power, and he showed that he could use it to advantage. Meean Meer is a large military cantonment five or six miles from Lahore, and there were then some

four thousand native troops there, with only about thirteen hundred Europeans of the Queen's and the Company's service. There was no time to be lost. While the Punjaub held firm it was like a barrier raised at one side of the rebellious movement, not merely preventing it from going any farther in that direction, but keeping it pent up until the moment came when the blow from the other direction could fall upon it. The first thing to be done to strike effectively at the rebellion was to make an attack on Delhi; and the possession of the Punjaub was of inestimable advantage to the authorities for that purpose. There was no actual reason to assume that the Sepoys in Meean Meer intended to join the rebellion. There would be a certain danger of converting them into rebels if any rash movement were to be made for the purpose of guarding against treachery on their part. Either way was a serious responsibility, a momentous risk. The authorities soon made up their minds. Any risk would be better than that of leaving it in the power of the native troops to join the rebellion. A ball and supper were to be given at Lahore that night. To avoid creating any alarm it was arranged that the entertainments should take place. During the dancing and feasting Mr. Montgomery held a council of the leading officials of Lahore, civil and military, and it was resolved at once to disarm the native troops. A parade was ordered for daybreak at Meean Meer; and on the parade ground an order was given for a military movement which brought the heads of four columns of the native troops in front of twelve guns charged with grape, the artillerymen with their port-fires lighted, and the soldiers of one of the Queen's regiments standing behind with loaded muskets. A command was given to the Sepoys to pile arms. They had immediate death before them if they disobeyed. They stood literally at the cannon's mouth. They piled their arms, which were borne away at once in carts by European soldiers, and all chances of a rebellious movement were over in that province, and the Punjaub was saved. Something of the same kind was done at Mooltan, in the Lower Punjaub, later on; and the province, thus assured to English civil and military authority, became a basis for some of the most important operations by which the Mutiny was crushed, and the sceptre of India restored to the Queen.

Within little more than a fortnight from the occupation of Delhi by the rebels, the British forces under General Anson, the Commander-in-Chief, were advancing on that city. The

commander did not live to conduct any of the operations. He died of cholera almost at the beginning of the march. The siege of Delhi proved long and difficult. Another general died, another had to give up his command, before the city was recaptured. It was justly considered by Lord Canning and by all the authorities as of the utmost importance that Delhi should be taken before the arrival of great reinforcements from home. Meanwhile the rebellion was breaking out at new points almost everywhere in these northern and north-western regions. On May 30 the Mutiny declared itself at Lucknow. Sir Henry Lawrence was governor of Oudh. He endeavoured to drive the rebels from the place, but the numbers of the mutineers were overwhelming. He had under his command, too, a force partly made up of native troops, and some of these deserted him in the battle. He had to retreat and to fortify the Residency at Lucknow, and remove all the Europeans, men, women, and children thither, and patiently stand a siege. Lawrence himself had not long to endure the siege. On July 2 he had been up with the dawn, and after a great amount of work he lay on the sofa, not, as it has been well said, to rest, but to transact business in a recumbent position. His nephew and another officer were with him. Suddenly a great crash was heard, and the room was filled with smoke and dust. One of his companions was flung to the ground. A shell had burst. When there was silence the officer who had been flung down called out, 'Sir Henry, are you hurt?' 'I am killed,' was the answer that came faintly but firmly from Sir Henry Lawrence's lips. The shell had wounded him in the thigh so fearfully as to leave surgery no chance of doing anything for his relief. On the morning of July 4 he died calmly and in perfect submission to the will of Providence. He had made all possible arrangements for his successor, and for the work to be done. He desired that on his tomb should be engraven merely the words, 'Here lies Henry Lawrence, who tried to do his duty.' The epitaph was a simple truthful summing up of a simple truthful career. The man, however, was greater than the career. Lawrence had not opportunity to show in actual result the greatness of spirit that was in him. The immense influence he exercised over all who came within his reach bears testimony to his strength and nobleness of character better than any of the mere successes which his biographer can record. He was full of sympathy. His soul was alive to the noblest and purest aspirations. 'It

is the due admixture of romance and reality,' he was himself accustomed to say, 'that best carries a man through life.' No professional teacher or philosopher ever spoke a truer sentence. As one of his many admirers says of him—'what he said and wrote, he did, or rather he was.' Let the bitterest enemy of England write the history of her rule in India, and set down as against her every wrong that was done in her name, from those which Burke denounced to those which the Madras Commission exposed, he will have to say that men, many men, like Henry Lawrence, lived and died devoted to the cause of that rule, and the world will take account of the admission.

During the later days of Sir Henry Lawrence's life it had another trouble added to it by the appeals which were made to him from Cawnpore for a help which he could not give. The city of Cawnpore stands in the Doab, a peninsula between the Ganges and the Jumna, and is built on the south bank of the Ganges, there nearly a quarter of a mile broad in the dry season, and more than a mile across when swelled by the rains. In 1801, the territory lapsed into the possession of the Company. From that time it took rank as one of our first-class military stations. The city commanded the bridge over which passed the high road to Lucknow, the capital of our new province. The distance from Cawnpore to Lucknow is about fifty miles as the bird flies. At the time when the Mutiny broke out in Meerut there were some three thousand native soldiers in Cawnpore, consisting of two regiments of infantry, one of cavalry, and a company of artillerymen. There were about three hundred officers and soldiers of English birth. The European or Eurasian population, including women and children, numbered about one thousand. These consisted of the officials, the railway people, some merchants and shopkeepers and their families. The native town had about sixty thousand inhabitants. The garrison was under the command of Sir Hugh Wheeler, a man of some seventy-five years of age, among the oldest of an old school of Bengal officers. The revolt was looked for at Cawnpore from the moment when the news came of the rising at Meerut; and it was not long expected before it came. Sir Hugh Wheeler applied to Sir Henry Lawrence for help; Lawrence of course could not spare a man. Then Sir Hugh Wheeler remembered that he had a neighbour whom he believed to be friendly, despite of very recent warnings from Sir Henry Lawrence and others to the contrary. He called this neigh-

bour to his assistance, and his invitation was promptly answered. The Nana Sahib came with two guns and some three hundred men to lend a helping hand to the English commander.

The Nana Sahib resided at Bithoor, a small town twelve miles up the river from Cawnpore. He represented a grievance. Bajee Rao, Peishwa of Poonah, was the last prince of one of the great Mahratta dynasties. The East India Company believed him guilty of treachery against them, of bad government of his dominions, and so forth; and they found a reason for dethroning him. He was assigned, however, a residence in Bithoor, and a large pension. He had no children, and he adopted as his heir Seereek Dhoondoo Punth, the man who will be known to all time by the infamous name of Nana Sahib. According to Hindoo belief it is needful for a man's eternal welfare that he leave a son behind him to perform duly his funeral rites; and the adoption of a son is recognised as in every sense conferring on the adopted all the rights that a child of the blood could have. Bajee died in 1851, and Nana Sahib claimed to succeed to all his possessions. Lord Dalhousie had shown in many instances a strangely unwise disregard of the principle of adoption. The claim of the Nana to the pension was disallowed. Nana Sahib sent a confidential agent to London to push his claim there. This man was a clever and handsome young Mohammedan who had at one time been a servant in an Anglo-Indian family, and had picked up a knowledge of French and English. His name was Azimoolah Khan. This emissary visited London in 1854, and became a lion of the fashionable season. He did not succeed in winning over the Government to take any notice of the claims of his master, but being very handsome and of sleek and alluring manners, he became a favourite in the drawing-rooms of the metropolis, and was under the impression that an unlimited number of Englishwomen of rank were dying with love for him. On his way home he visited Constantinople and the Crimea. It was then a dark hour for the fortunes of England in the Crimea, and Azimoolah Khan swallowed with glad and greedy ear all the alarmist rumours that were afloat in Stamboul about the decay of England's strength and the impending domination of Russian power over Europe and Asia. The Western visit of this man was not an event without important consequences. He doubtless reported to his master that the strength of England was on the wane; and while stimulating his hatred and revenge, stimulated also his confi-

dence in the chances of an effort to gratify both. With Azimoolah Khan's mission and its results ended the hopes of Nana Sahib for the success of his claims, and began, we may presume, his resolve to be revenged.

Nana Sahib, although his claim on the English Government was not allowed, was still rich. He had the large private property of the man who had adopted him, and he had the residence at Bithoor. He kept up a sort of princely state. He never visited Cawnpore; the reason being, it is believed, that he would not have been received there with princely honours. But he was especially lavish of his attentions to English visitors, and his invitations went far and wide among the military and civil servants of the Crown and the Company. He cultivated the society of English men and women; he showered his civilities upon them. He did not speak or even understand English, but he took a great interest in English history, customs, and literature. He was luxurious in the most thoroughly Oriental fashion; and Oriental luxury implies a great deal more than any experience of Western luxury would suggest. At the time with which we are dealing he was only about thirty-six years of age, but he was prematurely heavy and fat, and seemed to be as incapable of active exertion as of unkindly feeling. There can be little doubt that all this time he was a dissembler of more than common Eastern dissimulation. It appears almost certain that while he was lavishing his courtesies and kindnesses upon Englishmen without discrimination, his heart was burning with a hatred to the whole British race. A sense of his wrongs had eaten him up. It is a painful thing to say, but it is necessary to the truth of this history, that his wrongs were genuine. He had been treated with injustice. According to all the recognised usages of his race and his religion, he had a claim indefeasible in justice to the succession which had been unfairly and unwisely denied to him. It was to Nana Sahib, then, that poor old Sir Hugh Wheeler in the hour of his distress applied for assistance. Most gladly, we can well believe, did the Nana come. He established himself in Cawnpore with his guns and his soldiers. Sir Hugh Wheeler had taken refuge, when the Mutiny broke out, in an old military hospital with mud walls, scarcely four feet high, hastily thrown up around it, and a few guns of various calibre placed in position on the so-called entrenchments. Within these almost shadowy and certainly crumbling entrenchments

were gathered about a thousand persons, of whom 465 were men of every age and profession. The married women and grown daughters were about 280; the children about the same number. Of the men there were probably 400 who could fight.

As soon as Nana Sahib's presence became known in Cawnpore he was surrounded by the mutineers, who insisted that he must make common cause with them and become one of their leaders. He put himself at their disposal. He gave notice to Sir Hugh Wheeler that if the entrenchments were not surrendered, they would be instantly attacked. They were attacked. A general assault was made upon the miserable mud walls on June 12, but the resistance was heroic and the assault failed. It was after that assault that the garrison succeeded in sending a message to Sir Henry Lawrence at Lucknow, craving for the aid which it was absolutely impossible for him to give. From that time the fire of the mutineer army on the English entrenchments never ceased. Whenever a regular attack was made the assailants invariably came to grief. The little garrison, thinning in numbers every day and almost every hour, held out with splendid obstinacy, and always sent those who assailed it scampering back—except of course for such assailants as perforce kept their ground by the persuasion of the English bullets. The little population of women and children behind the entrenchments had no roof to shelter them from the fierce Indian sun. They cowered under the scanty shadow of the low walls often at the imminent peril of the unceasing Sepoy bullets. The only water for their drinking was to be had from a single well, at which the guns of the assailants were unceasingly levelled. To go to the well and draw water became the task of self-sacrificing heroes, who might with better chances of safety have led a forlorn hope. The water which the fainting women and children drank might have seemed to be reddened by blood; for only at the price of blood was it ever obtained. It may seem a trivial detail, but it will count for much in a history of the sufferings of delicately nurtured English women, that from the beginning of the siege of the Cawnpore entrenchments to its tragic end, there was not one spongeful of water to be had for the purposes of personal cleanliness. The inmates of that ghastly garrison were dying like flies. One does not know which to call the greater; the suffering of the women or the bravery of the men.

A conviction began to spread among the mutineers that it was of no use attempting to conquer these terrible British sahibs; that so long as one of them was alive he would be as formidable as a wild beast in its lair. The Sepoys became unwilling to come too near the low crumbling walls of the entrenchment. Those walls might have been leaped over as easily as that of Romulus; but of what avail to know that, when from behind them always came the fatal fire of the Englishmen? It was no longer easy to get the mutineers to attempt anything like an assault. The English themselves began to show a perplexing kind of aggressive enterprise, and took to making little sallies in small numbers indeed, but with astonishing effect, on any bodies of Sepoys who happened to be anywhere near. Utterly, overwhelmingly, preposterously outnumbered as the Englishmen were, there were moments when it began to seem almost possible that they might actually keep back their assailants until some English army could come to their assistance and take a terrible vengeance upon Cawnpore. Nana Sahib began to find that he could not take by assault those wretched entrenchments; and he could not wait to starve the garrison out. He therefore resolved to treat with the English. The terms, it is believed, were arranged by the advice and assistance of Tantia Topee, his lieutenant, and Azimoolah Khan, the favourite of English drawing-rooms. An offer was sent to the entrenchments, the terms of which are worthy of notice. 'All those,' it said, 'who are in no way connected with the acts of Lord Dalhousie, and who are willing to lay down their arms, shall receive a safe passage to Allahabad.' The terms had to be accepted. There was nothing else to be done. The English people were promised, during the course of the negotiations, sufficient supplies of food and boats to carry them to Allahabad, which was now once more in the possession of England. The relief was unspeakable for the survivors of that weary defence. The women, the children, the wounded, the sick, the dying, welcomed any terms of release. Not the faintest suspicion crossed any mind of the treachery that was awaiting them. How, indeed, could there be any such suspicion? Not for years and years had even Oriental warfare given example of such practice as that which Nana Sahib and the graceful and civilised Azimoolah Khan had now in preparation.

The time for the evacuation of the garrison came. The boats were in readiness on the Ganges. The long procession

of men, women, and children passed slowly down; very slowly in some instances, because of the number of sick and wounded by which its progress was encumbered. Some of the chief among the Nana's counsellors took their stand in a little temple on the margin of the river, to superintend the embarkation and the work that was to follow it. Nana Sahib himself was not there. It is understood that he purposely kept away; he preferred to hear of the deed when it was done. His faithful lieutenant, Tantia Topee, had given orders, it seems, that when a trumpet sounded, some work, for which he had arranged, should begin. The wounded and the women were got into the boats in the first instance. The officers and men were scrambling in afterwards. Suddenly the blast of a trumpet was heard. The boats were of the kind common on the rivers of India, covered with roofs of straw, and looking, as some accounts describe them, not unlike floating haystacks. The moment the bugle sounded, the straw of the boat-roofs blazed up, and the native rowers began to make precipitately for the shore. They had set fire to the thatch, and were now escaping from the flames they had purposely lighted up. At the same moment there came from both shores of the river thick showers of grapeshot and musketry. The banks of the Ganges seemed in an instant alive with shot; a very rain of bullets poured in upon the devoted inmates of the boats. To add to the horrors of the moment, if, indeed, it needed any addition, nearly all the boats stuck fast in mudbanks, and the occupants became fixed targets for the fire of their enemies. Only three of the boats floated. Two of these drifted to the Oudh shore, and those on board them were killed at once. The third floated farther along with the stream, reserved for further adventures and horrors. The firing ceased when Tantia Topee and his confederates thought that enough had been done; and the women and children who were still alive were brought ashore and carried in forlorn procession back again through the town where they had suffered so much, and which they had hoped that they were leaving for ever. They were about 125 in number, women and children. Some of them were wounded. There were a few well-disposed natives who saw them and were sorry for them; who had perhaps served them, and experienced their kindness in other days, and who now had some grateful memory of it, which they dared not express by any open profession of sympathy. Certain of these after-

wards described the English ladies as they saw them pass. They were bedraggled and dishevelled, these poor English women; their clothes were in tatters; some of them were wounded, and the blood was trickling from their feet and legs. They were carried to a place called the Savada House, a large building, once a charitable institution bearing the name of Salvador, which had been softened into Savada by Asiatic pronunciation. On board the one boat which had floated with the stream were more than a hundred persons. The boat was attacked by a constant fire from both banks as it drifted along. At length a party of some twelve men, or thereabouts, landed with the bold object of attacking their assailants and driving them back. In their absence the boat was captured by some of the rebel gangs, and the women and the wounded were brought back to Cawnpore. Some sixty men, twenty-five women, and four children were thus recaptured. The men were immediately shot. It may be said at once, that of the gallant little party who went ashore to attack the enemy, hand to hand, four finally escaped, after adventures so perilous and so extraordinary that a professional story-teller would hardly venture to make them part of a fictitious narrative.

The Nana had now a considerable number of English women in his hands. They were removed, after a while, from their first prison-house to a small building north of the canal, and between the native city and the Ganges. Here they were cooped up in the closest manner, except when some of them were taken out in the evening and set to the work of grinding corn for the use of their captors. Cholera and dysentery set in among these unhappy sufferers, and some eighteen women and seven children died. Let it be said for the credit of womanhood, that the royal widows, the relicts of the Nana's father by adoption, made many efforts to protect the captive Englishwomen, and even declared that they would throw themselves and their children from the palace windows if any harm were done to the prisoners. We have only to repeat here, that as a matter of fact no indignities, other than that of the compulsory corn-grinding, were put upon the English ladies. They were doomed, one and all, to suffer death, but they were not, as at one time was believed in England, made to long for death as an escape from shame. Meanwhile the prospects of the Nana and his rebellion were growing darker and darker. He must have begun to know by this time that he had no chance of establishing himself

as a ruler anywhere in India. The English had not been swept out of the country with a rush. The first flood of the Mutiny had broken on their defences, and already the tide was falling. The Nana well knew it never would rise again to the same height in his day. The English were coming on. Neill had recaptured Allahabad, and cleared the country all round it of any traces of rebellion. Havelock was now moving forward from Allahabad towards Cawnpore, with six cannon and about a thousand English soldiers. Very small in point of numbers was that force when compared with that which Nana Sahib could even still rally round him; but no one in India now knew better than Nana Sahib what extraordinary odds the English could afford to give with the certainty of winning. Havelock's march was a series of victories, although he was often in such difficulties that the slightest display of real generalship or even soldiership on the part of his opponents might have stopped his advance. He had one encounter with the lieutenant of the Nana, who had under his command nearly four thousand men and twelve guns, and Havelock won a complete victory in about ten minutes. He defeated in the same off-hand way various other chiefs of the Mutiny. He was almost at the gates of Cawnpore.

Then it appears to have occurred to the Nana, or to have been suggested to him, that it would be inconvenient to have his English captives recaptured by the enemy, their countrymen. It may be that in the utter failure of all his plans and hopes he was anxious to secure some satisfaction, to satiate his hatred in some way. It was intimated to the prisoners that they were to die. Among them were three or four men. These were called out and shot. Then some Sepoys were sent to the house where the women still were, and ordered to fire volleys through the windows. This they did, but apparently without doing much harm. Some persons are of opinion, from such evidence as can be got, that the men purposely fired high above the level of the floor, to avoid killing any of the women and children. In the evening five men, two Hindoo peasants, two Mohammedan butchers, and one Mohammedan wearing the red uniform of the Nana's bodyguard, were sent up to the house, and entered it. Incessant shrieks were heard to come from that fearful house. The Mohammedan soldier came out to the door holding in his hand a sword-hilt from which the blade had been broken off, and he exchanged this now useless instrument for a weapon in

proper condition. Not once but twice this performance took place. Evidently the task imposed on these men was hard work for the sword-blades. After a while the five men came out of the now quiet house and locked the doors behind them. During that time they had killed nearly all the English women and children. They had slaughtered them like beasts in the shambles. In the morning the five men came again with several attendants to clear out the house of the captives. Their task was to tumble all the bodies into a dry well beyond some trees that grew near. Any of the bodies that had clothes worth taking were carefully stripped before being consigned to this open grave. When Cawnpore was afterwards taken by the English those who had to look down into that well saw a sight the like of which no man in modern days had ever seen elsewhere. No attempt shall be made to describe it here. When the house of the massacre itself was entered, its floors and its walls told with terrible plainness of the scene they had witnessed. The plaster of the walls was scored and seamed with sword-slashes low down and in the corners, as if the poor women had crouched down in their mortal fright with some wild hope of escaping the blows. The floor was strewn with scraps of dresses, women's faded ragged finery, frilling, underclothing, broken combs, shoes, and tresses of hair. There were some small and neatly severed curls of hair too which had fallen on the ground, but evidently had never been cut off by the rude weapon of a professional butcher. These doubtless were keepsakes that had been treasured to the last, parted with only when life and all were going. One or two scraps of paper were found which recorded deaths and such like interruptions of the monotony of imprisonment; but nothing more. The well of horrors has since been filled up, and a memorial chapel surrounded by a garden built upon the spot.

Something, however, has still to be told of the Nana and his fortunes. He made one last stand against the victorious English in front of Cawnpore, and was completely defeated. He galloped into the city on a bleeding and exhausted horse; he fled thence to Bithoor, his residence. He had just time left, it is said, to order the murder of a separate captive, a woman who had previously been overlooked or purposely left behind. Then he took flight in the direction of the Nepaulese marches; and he soon disappears from history. Nothing of his fate was ever known. Many years afterwards England

and India were treated to a momentary sensation by a story of the capture of Nana Sahib. But the man who was arrested proved to be an entirely different person; and indeed from the moment of his arrest few believed him to be the long-lost murderer of the English women. In days more superstitious than our own, popular faith would have found an easy explanation of the mystery which surrounded the close of Nana Sahib's career. He had done, it would have been said, the work of a fiend; and he had disappeared as a fiend would do when his task was accomplished.

The capture of Delhi was effected on September 20. Brigadier-General Nicholson led the storming columns, and paid for his bravery and success the price of a gallant life. Nicholson was one of the bravest and most capable officers whom the war produced. It is worthy of record as an evidence of the temper aroused even in men from whom better things might have been expected, that Nicholson strongly urged the passing of a law to authorise flaying alive, impalement, or burning of the murderers of the women and children in Delhi. He urged this view again and again, and deliberately argued it on grounds alike of policy and principle. The fact is recorded here not in mere disparagement of a brave soldier, but as an illustration of the manner in which the old elementary passions of man's untamed condition can return upon him in his pride of civilisation and culture, and make him their slave again. The taking of Delhi was followed by an act of unpardonable bloodshed. A young officer, Hodson, the leader of the little force known as Hodson's Horse, was acting as chief of the Intelligence Department. He was especially distinguished by an extraordinary blending of cool, calculating craft and reckless daring. By the help of native spies Hodson discovered that when Delhi was taken the king and his family had taken refuge in the tomb of the Emperor Hoomayoon, a structure which, with the buildings surrounding and belonging to it, constituted a sort of suburb in itself. Hodson went boldly to this place with a few of his troopers and captured the three royal princes of Delhi. He tried them as rebels taken red-handed, and borrowing a carbine from one of his troopers, he shot them dead with his own hand. Their corpses, half-naked, were exposed for some days at one of the gates of Delhi. Hodson was killed not long after; we might well wish to be free to allow him to rest without censure in his untimely grave. He was a brave and clever soldier, but one who unfortunately allowed a fierce

temper to over-rule the better instincts of his nature and the guidance of a cool judgment.

General Havelock made his way to the relief of Lucknow. Sir James Outram, who had returned from Persia, had been sent to Oudh with complete civil and military authority. He would in the natural order of things have superseded Havelock, but he refused to rob a brave and successful comrade of the fruits of his toil and peril, and he accompanied Havelock as a volunteer. Havelock was enabled to continue his victorious march, and on September 25 he was able to relieve the besieged English at Lucknow. His coming, it can hardly be doubted, saved the women and children from such a massacre as that of Cawnpore; but Havelock had not the force that might have driven the rebels out of the field, and if England had not been prepared to make greater efforts for the rescue of her imperilled people, it is but too probable that the troops whom Havelock brought to the relief of Lucknow would only have swelled the number of the victims. But in the meantime the stout soldier, Sir Colin Campbell, whom we have already heard of in the Crimean campaign, had been appointed Commander-in-Chief of the Indian forces, and had arrived in India. He set out for Lucknow. He had under his command only some 5,000 men, a force miserably inferior in number to that of the enemy; but in those days an English officer thought himself in good condition to attack if the foe did not outnumber him by more than four or five to one. A series of actions was fought by Sir Colin Campbell and his little force attacking the enemy on one side, who were attacked at the same time by the besieged garrison of the residency. On the morning of November 17, by the combined efforts of both forces, the enemy was dislodged. Sir Colin Campbell resolved, however, that the residency must be evacuated; and accordingly on the 19th heavy batteries were opened against the enemy's position, as if for the purpose of assault, and under cover of this operation the women, the sick, and the wounded were quietly removed to the Dilkoosha, a small palace in a park about five miles from the residency, which had been captured by Sir Colin Campbell on his way to attack the city. By midnight of the 22nd the whole garrison, without the loss of a single man, had left the residency. Two or three days more saw the troops established at Alumbagh, some four miles from the residency, in another direction from that of the Dilkoosha.

Alumbagh is an isolated cluster of buildings, with grounds and enclosure to the south of Lucknow. The name of this place

is memorable for ever in the history of the war. It was there that Havelock closed his glorious career. He was attacked with dysentery, and died on November 24. The Queen created him a baronet, or rather affixed that honour to his name on the 27th of the same month, not knowing then that the soldier's time for struggle and for honour was over. The title was transferred to his son, the present Sir Henry Havelock, who had fought gallantly under his father's eyes. The fame of Havelock's exploits reached England only a little in advance of the news of his death. So many brilliant deeds had seldom in the history of our wars been crowded into days so few. All the fame of that glorious career was the work of some strenuous splendid weeks. Havelock's promotion had been slow. He had not much for which to thank the favour of his superiors. No family influence, no powerful patrons or friends had made his slow progress more easy. He was more than sixty when the mutiny broke out. He was born in April 1795; he was educated at the Charterhouse, London, where his grave, studious ways procured for him the nickname of 'Old Phlos'—the schoolboy's 'short' for 'old philosopher.' He went out to India in 1823, and served in the Burmese war of 1824, and the Sikh war of 1845. He was a man of grave and earnest character, a Baptist by religion, and strongly penetrated with a conviction that the religious spirit ought to pervade and inform all the duties of military as well as civil life. By his earnestness and his example he succeeded in animating those whom he led with similar feelings; and 'Havelock's saints' were well known through India by this distinctive appropriate title. 'Havelock's saints' showed, whenever they had an opportunity, that they could fight as desperately as the most reckless sinners; and their commander found the fame flung in his way, across the path of his duty, which he never would have swerved one inch from that path to seek. Amid all the excitement of hope and fear, passion and panic, in England, there was time for the whole heart of the nation to feel pride in Havelock's career and sorrow for his untimely death. Untimely? Was it after all untimely? Since when has it not been held the crown of a great career that the hero dies at the moment of accomplished victory?

Sir Colin Campbell left General Outram in charge of Alumbagh, and himself hastened towards Cawnpore. A large hostile force, composed chiefly of the revolted army of Scindia, the ruler of Gwalior, had marched upon Cawnpore. General

Windham, who held the command there, had gone out to attack them. He was compelled to retreat, not without severe loss, to his entrenchments at Cawnpore, and the enemy occupied the city itself. Sir Colin Campbell attacked the rebels at one place; Sir Hope Grant attacked them at another, and Cawnpore was retaken. Sir Colin Campbell then turned his attention to reconquering the entire city of Lucknow. It was not until March 19, 1858, that Lucknow fell completely into the hands of the English. Our operations had been almost entirely by artillery, and had been conducted with consummate prudence as well as boldness, and our loss was therefore very small, while the enemy suffered most severely. Among our wounded was the gallant leader of the naval brigade, Sir William Peel, son of the great statesman. Sir William Peel died at Cawnpore shortly after, of small-pox, his death remarked and lamented even amid all the noble deaths of that eventful time. One name must not be forgotten among those who endured the siege of Lucknow. It is that of Dr. Brydon, whom we last saw as he appeared under the walls of Jellalabad, the one survivor come back to tell the tale of the disastrous retreat from Cabul.

Practically, the reconquest of Lucknow was the final blow in the suppression of the great Bengal mutiny. Some episodes of the war, however, were still worthy of notice. For example, the rebels seized Gwalior, the capital of the Maharajah Scindia, who escaped to Agra. The English had to attack the rebels, retake Gwalior, and restore Scindia. The Maharajah Scindia of Gwalior had deserved well of the English Government. Under every temptation, every threat, and many profound perils from the rebellion, he had remained firm to his friendship. So, too, had Holkar, the Maharajah of the Indore territory. The country owes much to those two princes, for the part they took at her hour of need; and she has not, we are glad to think, proved herself ungrateful. One of those who fought to the last on the rebels' side was the Ranee, or Princess, of Jhansi, whose territory, as we have already seen, had been one of our annexations. For months after the fall of Delhi she contrived to baffle Sir Hugh Rose and the English. She led squadrons in the field. She fought with her own hand. She was engaged against us in the battle for the possession of Gwalior. In the uniform of a cavalry officer she led charge after charge, and she was killed among those who resisted to the last. Her body was found upon the field,

scarred with wounds enough in the front to have done credit to any hero. Sir Hugh Rose paid her the well-deserved tribute which a generous conqueror is always glad to be able to offer. He said, in his general order, that 'the best man upon the side of the enemy was the woman found dead, the Ranee of Jhansi.'

It is not necessary to describe, with any minuteness of detail, the final spasms of the rebellion. Tantia Topee, the lieutenant of Nana Sahib, was taken prisoner in April 1859, was tried for his share in the Cawnpore massacre, and was hanged like any vulgar criminal. The old King of Delhi was also put on trial, and being found guilty, was sentenced to transportation. He was sent to the Cape of Good Hope, but the colonists there refused to receive him, and this last of the line of the Grand Moguls had to go begging for a prison. He was finally carried to Rangoon, in British Burmah. On December 20, 1858, Lord Clyde, who had been Sir Colin Campbell, announced to the Governor-General that the rebellion was at an end, and on May 1, 1859, there was a public thanksgiving in England for the pacification of India.

CHAPTER XIV.

THE END OF 'JOHN COMPANY'

WHILE these things were passing in India, it is needless to say that the public opinion of England was distracted by agitation and by opposing counsels. For a long time the condition of Indian affairs had been regarded in England with something like absolute indifference. In the House of Commons a debate on any question connected with India was as strictly an affair of experts as a discussion on some local gas or water bill. The House in general did not even affect to have any interest in it. The officials who had to do with Indian affairs; the men on the Opposition benches who had held the same offices while their party was in power; these, and two or three men who had been in India, and were set down as crotchety because they professed any concern in its mode of government—such were the politicians who carried on an Indian debate, and who had the House all to themselves while the discussion lasted. The Indian Mutiny startled the public feeling of England out of this state of unhealthy

languor. First came the passion and panic, the cry for blood, the wholesale executions, the blowing of rebels from guns; then came a certain degree of reaction, and some eminent Englishmen were found to express alarm at the very sanguinary methods of repression and of punishment that were in favour among most of our fellow-countrymen in India.

It was during this season of reaction that the famous discussions took place on Lord Canning's proclamation. On March 3, 1858, the proclamation was issued from Allahabad to the chiefs of Oudh, and it announced that, with the exception of the lands then held by six loyal proprietors of the province, the proprietary right in the whole of the soil of Oudh was transferred to the British Government, which would dispose of it in such manner as might seem fitting. The disposal, however, was indicated by the terms of the proclamation. To all chiefs and landholders who should at once surrender to the Chief Commissioner of Oudh it was promised that their lives should be spared, 'provided that their hands are unstained by English blood murderously shed;' but it was stated that, 'as regards any further indulgence which may be extended to them, and the conditions in which they may hereafter be placed, they must throw themselves upon the justice and mercy of the British Government.' Read by the light of literalness, this proclamation unquestionably seemed to amount to an absolute confiscation of the whole soil of Oudh; for even the favoured landowners who were to retain their properties were given to understand that they retained them by the favour of the Crown and as a reward for their loyalty. Sir James Outram wrote at once to Lord Canning, pointing out that there were not a dozen landholders in Oudh who had not either themselves borne arms against us or assisted the rebels with men or money, and that, therefore, the effect of the proclamation would be to confiscate the entire proprietary right in the province and to make the chiefs and landlords desperate, and that the result would be a 'guerilla war for the extirpation, root and branch, of this class of men, which will involve the loss of thousands of Europeans by battle, disease, and exposure.' Lord Canning consented to insert in the proclamation a clause announcing that a liberal indulgence would be granted to those who should promptly come forward to aid in the restoration of order, and that 'the Governor-General will be ready to view liberally the claims which they may thus acquire to a restitution of their former rights.'

In truth, it was never the intention of Lord Canning to put in force any cruel and sweeping policy of confiscation. Lord Canning had come to the conclusion that the English Government must start afresh in their dealings with Oudh. He came to the conclusion that the necessary policy for all parties concerned was to make of the mutiny, and the consequent reorganisation, an opportunity not for a wholesale confiscation of the land, but for a measure which should declare that the land was held under the power and right of the English Government. The principle of his policy was somewhat like that adopted by Lord Durham in Canada. It seized the power of a dictator over life and property, that the dictator might be able to restore peace and order at the least cost in loss and suffering to the province and the population whose affairs it was his task to administer. But it may be freely admitted that on the face of it the proclamation of Lord Canning looked strangely despotic. Some of the most independent and liberal Englishmen took this view of it. Men who had supported Lord Canning through all the hours of clamour against him felt compelled to express disapproval of what they understood to be his new policy. It so happened that Lord Ellenborough was then President of the Board of Control, and Lord Ellenborough was a man who always acted on impulse, and had a passion for fine phrases. He had a sincere love of justice, according to his lights; but he had a still stronger love for antithesis. Lord Ellenborough therefore had no sooner received a copy of Lord Canning's proclamation than he despatched upon his own responsibility a rattling condemnation of the whole proceeding. The question was taken up immediately in both Houses of Parliament. Lord Shaftesbury in the House of Lords moved a resolution declaring that the House regarded with regret and serious apprehension the sending of such a despatch, as such a course must prejudice our rule in India by weakening the authority of the Governor-General and encouraging the resistance of rebels still in arms. A similar motion was introduced by Mr. Cardwell in the House of Commons. In both Houses the arraignment of the Ministry proved a failure. Lord Ellenborough at once took upon himself the whole responsibility of an act which was undoubtedly all his own, and he resigned his office. The resolution was therefore defeated in the House of Lords on a division, and had to be withdrawn in a rather ignominious manner in the House of Commons.

Lord Canning continued his policy, the policy which he had marked out for himself, with signal success. Within a few weeks after the capture of Lucknow, almost all the large landowners had tendered their allegiance. Lord Canning impressed upon his officers the duty of making their rule as considerate and conciliatory as possible. The new system established in Oudh was based upon the principle of recognising the Talookdars as responsible landholders, while so limiting their power by the authority of the Government as to get rid of old abuses, and protect the occupiers and cultivators of the soil. Canning, like Durham, only lived long enough to hear the general acknowledgment that he had done well for the country he was sent to govern, and for the country in whose name and with whose authority he went forth.

The rebellion pulled down with it a famous old institution, the government of the East India Company. Before the mutiny had been entirely crushed, the rule of 'John Company' came to an end. The administration of India had, indeed, long ceased to be under the control of the Company as it was in the days of Warren Hastings. A Board of Directors, nominated partly by the Crown and partly by the Company, sat in Leadenhall Street, and gave general directions for the government of India. But the Parliamentary department, called the Board of Control, had the right of reviewing and revising the decisions of the Company. The Crown had the power of nominating the Governor-General, and the Company had only the power of recalling him. This odd and perhaps unparalleled system of double government had not much to defend it on strictly logical grounds; and the moment a great crisis came it was natural that all the blame of difficulty and disaster should be laid upon its head. With the beginning of the mutiny the impression began to grow up in the public mind here that something of a sweeping nature must be done for the reorganisation of India; and before long this vague impression crystallised into a conviction that England must take Indian administration into her own hands, and that the time had come for the fiction of rule by a trading company to be absolutely given up. In the beginning of 1858 Lord Palmerston introduced a bill to transfer the authority of the Company formally and absolutely to the Crown. The plan of the scheme was that there were to be a president and a council of eight members, to be nominated by the Government. There was a large majority in the House of Commons in favour

of the bill; but the agitation caused by the attempt to assassinate the Emperor of the French, and Palmerston's ill-judged and ill-timed Conspiracy Bill, led to the sudden overthrow of his Government. When Lord Derby succeeded to power, he brought in a bill for the better government of India at once; but the measure was a failure. Then Lord John Russell proposed that the House should proceed by way of resolutions—that is, that the lines of a scheme of legislation should be laid down by a series of resolutions in committee of the whole House, and that upon those lines the Government should construct a measure. The suggestion was eagerly welcomed, and after many nights of discussion a basis of legislation was at last agreed upon. This bill passed into law in the autumn of 1858; and for the remainder of Lord Derby's tenure of power, his son, Lord Stanley, was Secretary of State for India. The bill, which was called 'An Act for the better Government of India,' provided that all the territories previously under the government of the East India Company were to be vested in her Majesty, and all the Company's powers to be exercised in her name. One of her Majesty's principal Secretaries of State was to have all the power previously exercised by the Company, or by the Board of Control. The Secretary was to be assisted by a Council of India, to consist of fifteen members, of whom seven were to be elected by the Court of Directors from their own body, and eight nominated by the Crown. The vacancies among the nominated were to be filled up by the Crown; those among the elected by the remaining members of the Council for a certain time, but afterwards by the Secretary of State for India. The competitive principle for the Civil Service was extended in its application and made thoroughly practical. The military and naval forces of the Company were to be deemed the forces of her Majesty. A clause was introduced declaring that, except for the purpose of preventing or repelling actual invasion of India, the Indian revenues should not without the consent of both Houses of Parliament, be applicable to defray the expenses of any military operation carried on beyond the external frontiers of her Majesty's Indian possessions. Another clause enacted that whenever an order was sent to India directing the commencement of hostilities by her Majesty's forces there, the fact should be communicated to Parliament within three months, if Parliament were then sitting, or if not, within one month after its next meeting. The Viceroy and Governor-General was to be supreme in

India, but was to be assisted by a Council. India now has nine provinces, each under its own civil government, and independent of the others, but all subordinate to the authority of the Viceroy. In accordance with this Act the government of the Company, the famed 'John Company,' formally ceased on September 1, 1858; and the Queen was proclaimed throughout India in the following November, with Lord Canning for her first Viceroy. It was but fitting that the man who had borne the strain of that terrible crisis, who had brought our Indian Empire safely through it all, and who had had to endure so much obloquy and to live down so much calumny, should have his name consigned to history as that of the first of the line of British Viceroys in India.

CHAPTER XV.

THE CONSPIRACY BILL.

The last chapter has told us that Lord Palmerston introduced a measure to transfer to the Crown the government of India, but that unexpected events in the meanwhile compelled him to resign office, and called Lord Derby and Mr. Disraeli to power. These events had nothing to do directly with the general policy of Palmerston or Lord Derby. At midday of January 14, 1858, Lord Palmerston seemed to be as popular and as strong as a minister well could be. But on the evening of January 14, Felice Orsini, an Italian exile, made his memorable attempt to assassinate the Emperor of the French. Orsini lost himself, and he drew the English Government down at the same time. Felice Orsini was well known in England. He was a handsome soldierly-looking man, with intensely dark eyes and dark beard, whose one great object was to endeavour to rouse up the English people to some policy of intervention on behalf of Italy against Austria. After a while, however, he found out that England would do nothing. The English Liberals, with the exception of a very few enthusiasts, were just as much opposed to the principle of intervention in the affairs of other States as the Conservatives. But Orsini set himself to devise some explanation for what was simply the prudent and just determination of all the statesmen and leading politicians of the country. He found the explanation in the subtle influence of the Emperor of the French, and he appears then to have

allowed the idea to get possession of him that the removal of the Emperor of the French from the scene was an indispensable preliminary to any policy having for its object the emancipation of Italy from Austrian rule. He brooded on this idea until it became a project and a passion. It transformed a soldier and a patriot into an assassin.

On January 14, Orsini and his fellow-conspirators made their attempt in the Rue Lepelletier in Paris. As the Emperor and Empress of the French were driving up to the door of the Opera-house in that street, Orsini and his companions flung at and into the carriage three shells or bombs shaped like a pear, and filled with detonating powder. The shells exploded, and killed and wounded many persons. So minute were the fragments in which the bombs burst that 516 wounds, great and little, were inflicted by the explosion. Ten persons were killed, 156 were wounded. It was said at the time that the Orsini plot frightened the Emperor of the French into taking up the cause of Italy. Historical revelations made at a later period show that this is altogether a mistake. We now know that at the time of the Congress of Paris Count Cavour had virtually arranged with the Emperor the plans of policy which were afterwards carried out, and that even before that time Cavour was satisfied in his own mind as to the ultimate certainty of Louis Napoleon's co-operation. Those who are glad to see Italy a nation, may be glad to know that Orsini's bombs had nothing to do with her success. Four persons were put on trial as participators in the attempt, three of them having actually thrown the bombs. Only two, however, were executed, Orsini and Pierri; the other two were sentenced to penal servitude for life.

In France an outburst of anger followed the attempt in the Rue Lepelletier; but the anger was not so much against Orsini as against England. One of the persons charged along with Orsini, although he was not tried in Paris, for he could not be found there, was a Frenchman, Simon Bernard, who had long been living in London. It was certain that many of the arrangements for the plot were made in London. The bombs were manufactured in Birmingham, and were ordered for Orsini by an Englishman. It was known that Orsini had many friends and admirers in this country. The Imperialists in France at once assumed that England was a country where assassination of foreign sovereigns was encouraged by the population, and not discouraged by the laws. The French Minister for Foreign

Affairs, Count Walewski, wrote a despatch, in which he asked whether England considered that hospitality was due to assassins. The Duc de Persigny, then Ambassador of France in England, made a very foolish and unfortunate reply to a deputation from the Corporation of London, in which he took on himself to point out that if the law of England was strong enough to put down conspiracies for assassination it ought to be put in motion, and if it were not, it ought to be made stronger. Addresses of congratulation were poured in upon the Emperor from the French army, and many of them were full of insulting allusions to England as the sheltering-ground of assassination. A semi-official pamphlet, published in Paris, and entitled 'The Emperor Napoleon the Third and England,' actually went the ridiculous length of describing an obscure debating club in a Fleet Street public-house, where a few dozen honest fellows smoked their pipes of a night and talked hazy politics, as a formidable political institution where regicide was nightly preached to fanatical desperadoes.

Thus we had the public excited on both sides. The feeling of anger on this side was intensified by the conviction that France was insulting us because she thought England was crippled by her troubles in India, and had no power to resent an insult. It was while men here were smarting under this sense of wrong that Lord Palmerston introduced his famous measure for the suppression and punishment of conspiracies to murder. The bill was introduced in consequence of the despatch of Count Walewski. In that despatch it was suggested to the English Government that they ought to do something to strengthen their law. The words were very civil. Nor was the request they contained in itself unreasonable. Long afterwards this country had to acknowledge, in reply to the demand of the United States, that a nation cannot get rid of her responsibility to a foreign people by pleading that her municipal legislation does not provide for this or that emergency. The natural rejoinder is, 'Then you had better make such a law; you are not to injure us and get off by saying your laws allow us to be injured.' But the conditions under which the request was made by France had put England in the worst possible mood for acceding to it. Ominous questions were put to the Government in both Houses of Parment. In the House of Commons Mr. Roebuck asked whether any communications had passed between the Governments of England and France with respect to the Alien Act or any

portion of our criminal code. Lord Palmerston answered by mentioning Count Walewski's despatch, which he said should be laid before the House. He added a few words about the addresses of the French regiments, and pleaded that allowance should be made for the irritation caused by the attempt on the life of the Emperor. He was asked a significant question—had the Government sent any answer to Count Walewski's despatch? No, was the reply; her Majesty's Government had not answered it; not yet.

Two or three days after Lord Palmerston moved for leave to bring in the Conspiracy to Murder Bill. The chief object of the measure was to make conspiracy to murder a felony instead of a mere misdemeanour, as it had been in England, and to render it liable to penal servitude for any period varying from five years to a whole life. Lord Palmerston made a feeble and formal attempt to prove that his bill was introduced simply as a measure of needed reform in our criminal legislation, and without special reference to anything that nad happened in France. The law against conspiracy to murder was very light in England, he showed, and was very severe in Ireland. It was now proposed to make the law the same in both countries—that was all. Of course no one was deceived by this explanation. The bill itself was as much of a sham as the explanation. Such a measure would not have been of any account whatever as regarded the offences against which it was particularly directed. Lord Palmerston, we may be sure, did not put the slightest faith in the efficacy of the piece of legislation he had undertaken to recommend to Parliament. He was compelled to believe that the Government would have to do something; and he came, after a while, to the conclusion that the most harmless measure would be the best. Mr. Kinglake moved an amendment, formally expressing the sympathy of the House with the French people, on account of the attempt made against the Emperor, but declaring it inexpedient to legislate in compliance with the demand made in Count Walewski's despatch of January 20, 'until further information is before it of the communications of the two Governments subsequent to the date of that despatch.' Mr. Disraeli voted for the bringing in of the bill, and made a cautious speech, in which he showed himself in favour of some sort of legislation, but did not commit himself to approval of that particular measure. The bill was read a first time. Two hundred and ninety-nine votes were for it; only ninety-nine against.

But before it came on for a second reading public opinion was beginning to declare ominously against it. The fact that the Government had not answered the despatch of Count Walewski told heavily against them. It was afterwards explained that Lord Cowley had been instructed to answer it orally, and that Lord Palmerston thought this course the more prudent, and the more likely to avoid an increase of irritation between the two countries. But public opinion in England was not now to be propitiated by counsels of moderation. The idea had gone abroad that Lord Palmerston was truckling to the Emperor of the French, and that the very right of asylum which England had so long afforded to the exiles of all nations, was to be sacrificed at the bidding of one who had been glad to avail himself of it in his hour of need.

This idea received support from the arrest of Dr. Simon Bernard, a French refugee, who was immediately put on trial as an accomplice in Orsini's plot. Bernard was a native of the South of France, a surgeon by profession, and had lived a long time in England. The arrest of Bernard may have been a very proper thing, but it came in with most untimely effect upon the Government. It was understood to have been made by virtue of information sent over from Paris, and no one could have failed to observe that the loosest accusations of that kind were always coming from the French capital. Many persons were influenced in their belief of Bernard's innocence by the fact, which does assuredly count for something, that Orsini himself had almost with his dying breath declared that Bernard knew nothing of the intended assassination. Not a few made up their minds that he was innocent because the French Government accused him of guilt; and still more declared that innocent or guilty he ought not to be arrested by English authorities at the bidding of a French Emperor. The debate was over and the Conspiracy Bill disposed of before the Bernard trial came to an end; but we may anticipate by a few days, and finish the Bernard story. Bernard was tried at the Central Criminal Court under existing law; he was defended by Mr. Edwin James, a well-known criminal lawyer, and he was acquitted. The trial was a practical illustration of the inutility of such special legislation as that which Lord Palmerston attempted to introduce. A new law of conspiracy could not have furnished any new evidence against Bernard, or persuaded a jury to convict him on such evidence as there was. In the prevailing temper of the public

the evidence should have been very clear indeed to induce an ordinary English jury to convict a man like Bernard, and the evidence of his knowledge of an intended assassination was anything but clear.

In the midst of the commotion caused by Bernard's arrest, Mr. Milner Gibson quietly gave notice of an amendment to the second reading of the Conspiracy Bill. The amendment proposed to declare that while the House heard with regret the allegation that the recent crime has been devised in England, and was always ready to assist in remedying any proved defects in the criminal law, 'yet it cannot but regret that her Majesty's Government, previously to inviting the House to amend the law of conspiracy by the second reading of this bill at the present time, have not felt it to be their duty to make some reply to the important despatch received from the French Government, dated Paris, January 20, 1858, and which has been laid before Parliament.' It might have been seen at once that this was a more serious business for the Government than Mr. Kinglake's amendment. In forecasting the result of a motion in the House of Commons much depends on the person who brings it forward. Has he a party behind him? If so, then the thing is important. If not, let his ability be what it will, his motion is looked on as a mere expression of personal opinion, interesting perhaps but without political consequence. Mr. Kinglake was emphatically a man without a party behind him; Mr. Gibson was emphatically a man of party and of practical politics. Mr. Kinglake was a brilliant literary man who had proved little better than a failure in the House; Mr. Gibson was a successful member of Parliament and nothing else. When the debate on the second reading came on it began soon to be seen that the condition of things was grave for Lord Palmerston. Every hour and every speech made it more ominous. Mr. Gladstone spoke eloquently against the Government. Mr. Disraeli suddenly discovered that he was bound to vote against the second reading, although he had voted for the first. The Government, he argued, had not yet answered the despatch as they might have done in the interval, and as they had not vindicated the honour of England, the House of Commons could not entrust them with the measure they demanded. Lord Palmerston saw that, in homely phrase, the game was up. He was greatly annoyed; he lost his temper, and did not even try to conceal the fact that he had lost it. For a

genial and kindly as well as a graceful man, it was singular how completely Lord Palmerston always lost his good manners when he lost his temper. Under the influence of sudden anger, luckily a rare influence with him, he could be actually vulgar. Lord Palmerston, in his reply to Mr. Milner Gibson, showed a positive spitefulness of tone and temper very unusual in him, and especially unbecoming in a losing man. A statesman may rise as he will, but he should fall with dignity. When the division was taken it appeared that there were 215 votes for the second reading and 234 against it. The Government, therefore, were left in a minority of 19; 146 Conservatives were in the majority and 84 Liberals. Besides these there were such of the Peelite party as Sir James Graham, Mr. Gladstone, Mr. Cardwell, and Mr. Sidney Herbert. Lord Palmerston at once made up his mind to resign. His resignation was accepted. Not quite a year had passed since the general elections sent Lord Palmerston into power triumphant over the routed Liberals and the prostrate Manchester School. Not quite a year, and now, on the motion of one of the lieutenants of that same party returned to their position again, Lord Palmerston is ejected from office. Palmerston once talked of having his 'tit-for-tat with John Russell.' The Peace party now had their tit-for-tat with him.

Lord Palmerston had the satisfaction before he left office of being able to announce the capture of Canton. The operations against China had been virtually suspended, it will be remembered, when the Indian Mutiny broke out. England had now got the co-operation of France. France had a complaint of long standing against China on account of the murder of some missionaries, for which redress had been asked in vain. There was, therefore, an allied attack made upon Canton, and of course the city was easily captured. Commissioner Yeh himself was taken prisoner, not until he had been sought for and hunted out in most ignominious fashion. He was found at last hidden away in some obscure part of a house. He was known by his enormous fatness. One of our officers caught hold of him; Yeh tried still to get away. A British seaman seized Yeh by his pigtail, twisted the tail several times round his hand, and thus made the unfortunate Chinese dignitary a helpless and ludicrous prisoner. When it was convenient to let loose Yeh's pigtail, he was put on board an English man-of-war, and afterwards sent to Calcutta, where he died early in the following year. Unless report greatly belied him he

had been exceptionally cruel, even for a Chinese official. The English and French Envoys, Lord Elgin and Baron Gros, succeeded in making a treaty with China. By the conditions of the treaty, England and France were to have ministers at the Chinese Court, on certain special occasions at least, and China was to be represented in London and Paris; there was to be toleration of Christianity in China, and a certain freedom of access to Chinese rivers for English and French mercantile vessels, and to the interior of China for English and French subjects. China was to pay the expenses of the war. It was further agreed that the term 'barbarian' was no longer to be applied to Europeans in China. There was great congratulation in England over this treaty, and the prospect it afforded of a lasting peace with China. The peace thus procured lasted in fact exactly a year.

The Ministry of Lord Derby, whereof Mr. Disraeli was leader of the House of Commons, was not supported by a Parliamentary majority, nor could it pretend to great intellectual and administrative ability. It had in its ranks two or three men of statesmanlike capacity, and a number of respectable persons possessing abilities about equal to those of any intelligent business man or county magistrate. Mr. Disraeli of course became Chancellor of the Exchequer. Lord Stanley undertook the Colonies; Mr. Walpole made a painstaking and conscientious Home Secretary, as long as he continued to hold the office. Lord Malmesbury muddled on with Foreign Affairs somehow; Lord Ellenborough's brilliant eccentric light perplexed for a brief space the Indian Department. General Peel was Secretary for war, and Mr. Henley, President of the Board of Trade. Lord Naas, afterwards Lord Mayo, became chief Secretary for Ireland, and was then supposed to be nothing more than a kindly, sweet-tempered man, of whom his most admiring friends would never have ventured to foreshadow such a destiny as that he should succeed to the place of a Canning and an Elgin, and govern the new India to which so many anxious eyes were turned. Sir John Pakington was made First Lord of the Admiralty, because a place of some kind had to be found for him, and he was as likely to do well at the head of the navy as anywhere else. No Conservative Government could be supposed to get on without Lord John Manners, and luckily there was the Department of Public Works for him.

Lord Stanley was regarded as a statesman of great and peculiar promise. The party to which he belonged were inclined to make him an object of especial pride, because he seemed to have in a remarkable degree the very qualities which most of their leading members were generally accused of wanting. Lord Stanley had a calm, meditative intellect. He studied politics as one may study a science. He understood political economy. He had travelled much; not merely making the old-fashioned grand tour, which most of the Tory country gentlemen had themselves made, but visiting the United States and Canada and the Indies, East and West. He was understood to know all about geography and cotton and sugar; and he had come up into politics in a happy age when the question of Free Trade was believed to be settled. Lord Stanley was strangely unlike his father in intellect and temperament. The one man was indeed almost the very opposite of the other. Lord Derby was all instinct and passion; Lord Stanley was all method and calculation. Lord Derby amused himself in the intervals of political work by translating classic epics and odes; Lord Stanley beguiled an interval of leisure by the reading of Blue-books. Lord Derby's eloquence when at its worst became fiery nonsense; Lord Stanley's sank occasionally to be nothing better than platitude. The extreme of the one was rhapsody, and of the other commonplace. Lord Derby was too hot and impulsive to be always a sound statesman; Lord Stanley was too coldly methodical to be the statesman of a crisis. Both men were to a certain sense superficial and deceptive. Lord Derby's eloquence had no great depth in it; and Lord Stanley's wisdom often proved somewhat thin. The career of Lord Stanley did not afterwards bear out all the expectations that were originally formed of him. He proved to be methodical, sensible, conscientious, slow. But at the time when he accepted the Indian Secretaryship people on both sides of the political contest looked to him as a new and great figure in Conservative politics. He was not an orator; he had nothing whatever of the orator in language or in temperament. His manner was ineffective; his delivery was decidedly bad. But his words carried weight with them, and even his commonplaces were received by some of his party as the utterances of an oracle. There were men among the Conservatives on the back benches who secretly hoped that in this wise young man was the upcoming statesman who was to deliver the party

from the thraldom of eccentric genius, and of an eloquence which, however brilliantly it fought their battles, seemed to them hardly a respectable sort of gift to be employed in the service of gentlemanlike Tory principles.

The superiority of the Opposition in debating power was simply overwhelming. In the House of Commons Mr. Disraeli was the only first-class debater, with the exception perhaps of the new Solicitor-General, Sir Hugh Cairns; and against him were Lord Palmerston, Lord John Russell, Mr. Gladstone, Sir James Graham, Mr. Sidney Herbert, Mr. Cobden, and Mr. Bright, everyone of them a first-class debater; some of them great Parliamentary orators; some, too, with the influence that comes from the fact of their having led ministries and conducted wars. In no political assembly in the world does experience of office and authority tell for more than in the House of Commons. To have held office confers a certain dignity even on mediocrity. The man who once held office, and who sits on the front bench opposite the ministry, has a sort of prescriptive right to be heard whenever he stands up to address the House, in preference to the most rising and brilliant talker who has never yet been a member of an administration. Mr. Disraeli well knew that his party held office only on sufferance from their opponents. If they attempted nothing, they were certain to be censured for inactivity; if they attempted anything, there was the chance of their exposing themselves to the combined attack of all the sections of the Liberal party. Luckily for them it was not easy to bring about such a combination just yet; but whenever it came, there was foreshown the end of the ministry.

Lord Derby's Government quietly dropped the unlucky Conspiracy Bill. England and France were alike glad to be out of the difficulty. There was a short interchange of correspondence, in which the French Government explained that they really had meant nothing in particular, and it was then announced to both Houses of Parliament that the misunderstanding was at an end, and that friendship had set in again. We have seen already how the India Bill was carried. Lord Derby's tenure of office was made remarkable by the success of one measure which must have given much personal satisfaction to Mr. Disraeli. The son of a Jewish father, the descendant of an ancient Jewish race, himself received as a child into the Jewish community, Mr. Disraeli had since his earliest years of intelligence been a Christian. But he had

never renounced his sympathies with the race to which he belonged, and the faith in which his fathers worshipped. He had always stood up for the Jews. He had in some of his novels seemingly set about to persuade his readers that all of good and great the modern world had seen was due to the unceasing intellectual activity of the Jewish race.

Mr. Disraeli had the good fortune to see the civil emancipation of the Jews accomplished during the time of his leadership of the House of Commons. It was a coincidence merely. He had always assisted the movement towards that end; but the success did not come from any inspiration of his; and most of his colleagues in power resisted it as long as they could. In July 1858 the long political and sectarian struggle came to an end when Baron Lionel Nathan de Rothschild was allowed to take his seat in the House of Commons as one of the representatives of the City of London. We have seen how by steps the Jews made their way into municipal office and into the magistracy. At the same time persistent efforts were being made to obtain for them the right to be elected to the House of Commons. On April 5, 1830, Mr. Robert Grant, then a colleague of one of the Gurney family in the representation of Norwich, moved for leave to bring in a bill to allow British-born Jews to enjoy all the rights of the British subject, without having to profess the religion of the State. At that time the Jews were unable to take the oath of allegiance, inasmuch as it was sworn on the Evangelists. Nor could they take the oath of abjuration, intended to guard against the return of the Stuarts, because that oath contained the words 'on the true faith of a Christian.'

The debate on Mr. Grant's motion was made memorable by the fact that Macaulay delivered then his maiden speech. The proposal for the admission of Jews to Parliament was supported by Lord John Russell, O'Connell, Brougham, and Mackintosh. Its first reading—for it was opposed even on the first reading—was carried by a majority of eighteen; but on the motion for the second reading the bill was thrown out by a majority of sixty-three, the votes for it being 165 and those against it 228. In 1833 Mr. Grant introduced his bill again, and this time was fortunate enough to pass it through the Commons. The Lords rejected it by a majority of fifty. The following year told a similar story. The Commons accepted; the Lords rejected. Meantime the Jews were being gradually relieved from other restrictions. A clause in Lord Denman's

Act for amending the laws of evidence allowed all persons to be sworn in courts of law in the form which they held most binding on their conscience. Lord Lyndhurst succeeded in passing a bill for the admission of Jews to corporate offices. Jews had, as we have already seen, been admitted to the shrievalty and the magistracy in the beginning of Queen Victoria's reign. In 1848 the struggle for their admission to Parliament was renewed, but the Lords still held out and would not pass a bill. Meanwhile influential Jews began to offer themselves as candidates for seats in Parliament. Mr. Salomons contested Shoreham and Maidstone successively and unsuccessfully. In 1847 Baron Lionel Rothschild was elected one of the members for the City of London. He resigned his seat when the House of Lords threw out the Jews' bill, and stood again and was again elected. It was not, however, until 1850 that the struggle was actually transferred to the floor of the House of Commons. In that year Baron Rothschild presented himself at the table of the House and offered to take the oaths in order that he might be admitted to take his seat. For four sessions he had sat as a stranger in the House of which he had been duly elected a member by the votes of one of the most important English constituencies. Now he came boldly up to the table and demanded to be sworn. He was sworn on the Old Testament. He took the Oaths of Allegiance and Supremacy; but when the Oath of Abjuration came he omitted from it the words 'on the true faith of a Christian.' He was directed to withdraw, and it was decided that he could neither sit nor vote unless he would consent to take the oath of abjuration in the fashion prescribed by the law.

Baron Rothschild did not contest the matter any further. Mr. David Salomons was inclined for a rougher and bolder course. He was elected for Greenwich in 1851, and he presented himself as Baron Rothschild had done. The same thing followed; he refused to say the words, 'on the true faith of a Christian,' and he was directed to withdraw. He did withdraw. He sat below the bar. A few evenings after a question was put to the Government by a member friendly to the admission of the Jews, Sir Benjamin Hall, afterwards Lord Llanover: 'If Mr. Salomons should take his seat, would the Government sue him for the penalties provided by the Act of Parliament in order that the question of right might be tried by a court of law?' Lord John Russell replied on the part

of the Government that they did not intend to take any proceedings; in fact, implied that they considered it no affair of theirs. Then Sir Benjamin Hall announced that Mr. Salomons felt he had no alternative but to take his seat and let the question of right be tested in that way. Forthwith, to the amazement and horror of steady old constitutional members, Mr. Salomons, who had been sitting below the bar, calmly got up, walked into the sacred precincts of the House, and took his seat amongst the members. A tumultuous scene followed. Half the House shouted indignantly to Mr. Salomons to 'withdraw, withdraw;' the other half called out encouragingly to him to keep his place. The perplexity was indescribable. What is to be done with a quiet and respectable gentleman who insists that he is a member of Parliament, comes and takes his seat in the House and will not withdraw? Mr. Salomons had undoubtedly been elected member for Greenwich by a considerable majority. His constituents believed him to be their lawful representative, and in fact had obtained from him a promise that if elected he would actually take his seat. Many members were of opinion, and eminent lawyers were among them, that in the strictest and most technical view of the law he was entitled to take his seat. Many more were convinced that the principle which excluded him was stupid and barbarous, and that the course he was at present taking was necessary for the purpose of obtaining its immediate repeal.

Therefore any idea of expelling Mr. Salomons was out of the question. The only thing that could be done was to set to work and debate the matter. Lord John Russell moved a resolution to the effect that Mr. Salomons be ordered to withdraw. Lord John Russell, it need hardly be said, was entirely in favour of the admission of the Jews, but thought Mr. Salomons' course irregular. Mr. Bernal Osborne moved an amendment declaring Mr. Salomons entitled to take his seat. A series of irregular discussions, varied and enlivened by motions for adjournment, took place; and Mr. Salomons not only voted in some of the divisions, but actually made a speech. He spoke calmly and well, and was listened to with great attention. He explained that in the course he had taken he was acting in no spirit of contumacy or presumption, and with no disregard for the dignity of the House, but that he had been lawfully elected, and that he felt bound to take his seat for the purpose of asserting his own rights and those of his constituents.

He intimated also that he would withdraw if just sufficient force were used to make him feel that he was acting under coercion. The motion that he be ordered to withdraw was carried. The Speaker requested Mr. Salomons to withdraw. Mr. Salomons held his place. The Speaker directed the Sergeant-at-Arms to remove Mr. Salomons. The Sergeant-at-Arms approached Mr. Salomons and touched him on the shoulder, and Mr. Salomons then quietly withdrew. The farce was over. It was evident to everyone that Mr. Salomons had virtually gained the victory, and that something must soon be done to get the House of Commons and the country out of the difficulty.

But the victory was not technically won for some time after. An action was brought against Mr. Salomons, not by the Government, in December 1851, to recover penalties for his having unlawfully taken his seat. The Court of Exchequer decided by three voices to one that the words 'on the true faith of a Christian' must be held in law to constitute a specially Christian oath, which could be taken by no one but a Christian, and without taking which no one could be a Member of Parliament. The legal question then being settled, there were renewed efforts made to get rid of the disabilities by an Act of Parliament. The House of Commons continued to pass Bills to enable Jews to sit in Parliament, and the House of Lords continued to throw them out. Lord John Russell, who had taken charge of the measure, introduced his Bill early in 1858. When it came up to the House of Lords it suffered the usual fate. Then Lord Lucan recommended the insertion of a clause in the Bill allowing either House to modify the form of oath according to its pleasure. Lord John Russell objected to this way of dealing with a great question, but did not feel warranted in refusing the proposed compromise. A Bill was drawn up with the clause suggested, and it was carried through both Houses. A Jew, therefore, might be a member of the House of Commons, if it chose to receive him, and might be shut out of the House of Lords if that House did not think fit to let him in. More than that, the House of Commons might change its mind at any moment, and by modifying the form of oath shut out the Jews again; or shut out any new Jewish candidates. Of course such a condition of things as that could not endure. An Act passed not long after which consolidated the Acts referring to Oaths of Allegiance, Abjuration, and Supremacy, and enabled Jews on all occasions whatever to omit the

words 'on the true faith of a Christian.' Thus the Jew was at last placed on a position of political equality with his Christian fellow-subjects, and an anomaly and a scandal was removed from our legislation.

About the same time as that which saw Baron Rothschild admitted to take his seat in the House of Commons, the absurd property qualification for Members of Parliament was abolished. This ridiculous system originally professed to secure that no man should be a member of the House of Commons who did not own a certain amount of landed property. It had not the slightest real force. Fictitious conveyances were issued as a matter of course. Anyone who desired a seat in Parliament could easily find some friend or patron who would convey to him by formal deed the fictitious ownership of landed property enough to satisfy the requirements of the law. As usual with Parliament, this anomaly was allowed to go on until a sudden scandal made its abolition necessary. One luckless person, who probably had no position and few friends, was actually prosecuted for having made a false declaration as to his property qualification. This practically settled the matter. Everyone knew that many other members of Parliament deserved in point of fact just as well as he the three months' imprisonment to which he was sentenced. Mr. Locke King introduced a Bill to abolish the property qualification hitherto required from the representatives of English and Irish constituencies, and it became law in a few days.

CHAPTER XVI.

DISRAELI'S FIRST REFORM ENTERPRISE.

When Lord Ellenborough abruptly resigned the place of President of the Board of Control he was succeeded by Lord Stanley, who, as we have seen already, became Secretary of State for India under the new system of government. Lord Stanley had been Secretary for the Colonies, and in this office he was succeeded by Sir Edward Bulwer Lytton. For some time previously Sir Edward Lytton had been taking so marked a place in Parliamentary life as to make it evident that when his party came into power, he was sure to have a chance of distinguishing himself in office. His political career had

up to this time been little better than a failure. He started in public life as a Radical and a friend of O'Connell; he was indeed the means of introducing Mr. Disraeli to the leader of the Irish party. He began his Parliamentary career before the Reform Bill. He was elected for St. Ives in 1831. After the passing of the Bill, he represented Lincoln for several years. At the general election of 1841 he lost his seat, and it was not until July 1852 that he was again returned to Parliament. This time he came in as member for the county of Herts. In the interval Lytton had succeeded to wealth and to landed estates, and he had almost altogether changed his political opinions. From a poetic Radical he had become a poetic Conservative. It was certain that whatever Lytton attempted he would in the end carry to some considerable success. His first years in the House of Commons had come to nothing. When he lost his seat most people fancied that he had accepted defeat, and had turned his back on Parliamentary life for ever. But Lytton possessed a marvellously strong will, and had a faith in himself which almost amounted to genius. He seems to have made up his mind that he would compel the world to confess him capable of playing the part of a politician. He was deaf, and his articulation was so defective that most persons who heard him speak in public for the first time found themselves unable to understand him. Such difficulties would assuredly have scared any ordinary man out of the Parliamentary arena for ever. But Lytton seems to have determined that he would make a figure in Parliament. He set himself to public speaking as coolly as if he were a man, like Gladstone or Bright, whom nature had marked out for such a competition by her physical gifts. He became a decided, and even in a certain sense, a great success. He could not strike into a debate actually going on; his defects of hearing shut him off from such a performance; and no man who is not a debater will ever hold a really high position in the House of Commons. But he could review a previous night's arguments in a speech abounding in splendid phrases and brilliant illustrations. He could pass for an orator. He actually did pass for an orator.

Sir Edward Lytton, as Secretary of the Colonies, seemed resolved to prove by active and original work that he could be a practical colonial statesman as well as a novelist, a playwright, and a Parliamentary orator. He founded the Colony of British Columbia. He sent Mr. Gladstone on a mission to

the Ionian Islands. There had long been dissatisfaction and even disturbance in the Ionian Islands. These seven islands were constituted a sort of republic or commonwealth by the Treaty of Vienna. But they were consigned to the Protectorate of Great Britain, which had the right of maintaining garrisons in them. It seems almost a waste of words to say that the islanders were not content with British government. For good or ill, the Hellenes wherever they are found are sure to be filled with an impassioned longing for Hellenic independence. The people of the Ionian Islands were eager to be allowed to enter into one system with the kingdom of Greece. Their national principles and aspirations, their personal vanities, their truly Greek restlessness and craving for novelty, all combined to make them impatient of that foreign protectorate which was really foreign government. Many English public men, however, were merely angry with these pestilential Greeks who did not know what was good for them. Sir Edward Bulwer Lytton had not been long enough in office to have become soaked in the ideas of routine. He thought the causes of the complaints and the dissatisfaction were well worth looking into. He offered therefore to Mr. Gladstone the office of Lord High Commissioner Extraordinary to the Ionian Islands, and Mr. Gladstone, who had been for some years out of office, acting as an independent supporter of Lord Palmerston's Government, accepted the offer and its duties. The appointment created much surprise, some anger, and a good deal of ridicule here at home. Sir Edward Bulwer Lytton had alluded in his despatch to Mr. Gladstone's Homeric scholarship, and this was, in the opinion of some politicians, an outrage upon all the principles and proprieties of routine. This, it was muttered, is what comes of literary men in office. A writer of novels is leader of the House of Commons, and he has another writer of novels at his side as Colonial Secretary, and between them they can think of nothing better than to send a man out to the Ionian Islands to listen to the trash of Greek demagogues, merely because he happens to be fond of reading Homer.

Mr. Gladstone went out to the Ionian Islands, and arrived at Corfu in November of 1858. He called together the Senate, and explained that he had not come there to discuss the propriety of maintaining the English protectorate, but only to inquire into the manner in which the just claims of the Ionian Islands might be secured by means of that protectorate. The

population of the islands however persisted in regarding him, not as the commissioner of a conservative English Government, but as 'Gladstone the Philhellene.' In vain he repeated his assurances that he came to reconcile the islands to the protectorate, and not to deliver them from it. The popular instinct insisted on regarding him as at least the precursor of their union to the kingdom of Greece. The National Assembly passed a formal resolution declaring for union with Greece. All that Mr. Gladstone's persuasions could do was to induce them to appoint a committee, and draw up a memorial to be presented in proper form to the protecting powers. In England Mr. Gladstone was attacked in an absurd manner. He was accused not merely of having encouraged the pretensions of the Ionian Islanders, but even talked of as if he, and he alone, had been their inspiration. National complacency could hardly push sensible men to greater foolishness than it did when it set half England wondering and raging over the impertinence of a Greek population who preferred union with a Greek kingdom to dependence upon an English protectorate. There can be no doubt that the people of the islands had under England's protectorate admirable means of communication by land and sea, splendid harbours, regular lines of steamers, excellent roads everywhere, while the people of the kingdom of Greece were hardly better off for all these advantages under Otho than they might have been under Codrus. But the populations of the islands persevered in the belief that they understood better what made them happy than anyone else could do. They agitated more strenuously than ever for annexation to the kingdom of Greece. A few years after their wish was granted. The Greeks got rid quietly of their heavy German king Otho, and on the advice chiefly of England they elected as sovereign a brother of the Princess of Wales, the second son of the King of Denmark. Then Lord John Russell, on behalf of the English Government, handed over the Ionian islands to the kingdom of Greece.

The year that followed Mr. Gladstone's mission to the Ionian islands (1859) was one of storm and stress on the European continent. It began with the memorable declaration of the Emperor of the French to the Austrian Ambassador at the Tuileries, that the relations between the two Empires were not such as he could desire. In fact Count Cavour had had his way. He had prevailed upon Louis Napoleon to expel the Austrians from Italy. In the career of Count Cavour our

times have seen perhaps the most remarkable illustration of that great Italian statesmanship which has always appeared at intervals in the history of Europe. Louis Napoleon was simply a weapon in the hands of such a man. When once the French Emperor had entered into a compact with him there was no escape from it. Cavour did not look like an Italian; at least a typical Italian. He looked more like an Englishman. He reminded Englishmen oddly of Dickens's Pickwick, with his large forehead, his general look of moony good-nature, and his spectacles. That commonplace homely exterior concealed unsurpassed force of character, subtlety of scheming, and power of will. Cavour had determined that France should fight Austria. The war was over, one might say, in a moment. Austria had no generals; the French army rushed to success; and then Louis Napoleon stopped short as suddenly as he had begun. He had proclaimed that he went to war to set Italy free from the Alps to the sea; but he made peace on the basis of the liberation of Lombardy from Austrian rule, and he left Venetia for another day and for other arms. He drew back before the very serious danger that threatened on the part of the German States, who showed ominous indications of a resolve to make the cause of Austria their own if France went too far. He held his hand from Venetia because of Prussia; seven years later Prussia herself gave Venetia to Italy.

The English Government had made futile attempts to prevent the outbreak of war. Meanwhile the Conservative Government could not exactly live on the mere reputation of having given good advice abroad to which no one would listen, and they determined to try their hand at a Reform Bill. Mr. Disraeli, as leader of the House of Commons, knew that a Reform Bill was one of the certainties of the future, and that whenever Lord John Russell happened to be in power again he would return to his first love in politics, a Reform Bill. He knew also that a refusal to have anything to do with reform would always expose the Tories in office to a coalition of all the Liberal factions against them. Mr. Disraeli had to choose between two dangers. He might risk all by refusing reform; he might risk all by attempting reform. He thought on the whole the wiser course would be to endeavour to take possession of the reform question for himself and his party. The reappearance of Mr. Bright in politics stimulated no doubt this resolve on the part of Mr.

Disraeli. It is not likely that the Prime Minister, Lord Derby, took any active interest in the matter. Lord Derby had outlived political ambition, or he had had perhaps all the political success he cared for. He had station of the highest; he had wealth and influence; he had fame as a great Parliamentary debater. Now that Brougham had ceased to take any leading part in debate he had no rival in the House of Lords. He was a sincere man without any pretence; and, if he did not himself care about reform, he was not likely to put on any appearance of enthusiasm about it. Nor did he set much store on continuing in office. He would be the same Lord Derby out of office as in. But this way of looking at things was by no means suitable to his energetic and ambitious lieutenant. Mr. Disraeli had not nearly attained the height of his ambition, nor had he by any means exhausted his political energies. Mr. Disraeli, therefore, was not a man to view with any satisfaction the consequences likely to come to the Conservative party from an open refusal to take up the cause of reform. At a time too when most of the Conservatives, and not a few of the Whigs, regarded Mr. Bright as only an eloquent and respectable demagogue, Mr. Disraeli had made up his mind that the Lancashire orator was a man of genius and foresight, who must be taken account of as a genuine political power. Mr. Bright had for a long time been withdrawn by ill-health from all share in political agitation, or politics of any kind. He now returned to public life. He flung himself into a new agitation for reform, and he was induced to draw up a Reform Bill of his own. It was practically a proposal to establish a franchise precisely like that which we have now, ballot and all, only that it threw the expenses of the returning officer on the county or borough rate, and it introduced a somewhat large measure of redistribution of seats.

Mr. Disraeli knew well enough that the upper and middle classes cared very little about a new Reform Bill. But it was evident that any political party could appeal to the support of the working-classes throughout the country in favour of any movement which promised reform. In short, Mr. Disraeli knew that reform had to come some time, and he was resolved to make his own game if he could. This time, however, he was not successful. The difficulties in his way were too great. It would have been impossible for him to introduce such a Reform Bill as Mr. Bright would

be likely to accept. His own party would not endure such a proposition. Mr. Disraeli's Reform Bill was a curiosity. It offered a variety of little innovations which nobody wanted or could have cared about, and it left out of sight altogether the one reform which alone gave an excuse for any legislation. Lord Grey's Reform Bill admitted the middle-class to legislation but left the working-class out. What was now wanted was a measure to let the working-class in. Yet Mr. Disraeli's scheme made no more account of the working-class as a whole than if they already possessed the vote—every man of them. The English working-classes cried out for the franchise, and Mr. Disraeli proposed to answer the cry by giving the vote to graduates of universities, medical practitioners, and school-masters.

Yet we may judge of the difficulties Mr. Disraeli had to deal with by the reception which even this poor little measure met with from some of his own colleagues. Mr. Walpole and Mr. Henley resigned office rather than have anything to do with it. Mr. Henley was a specimen of the class who might have been described as fine old English gentlemen. He was shrewd, blunt, and honest, given to broad jokes and to a high-flavoured old-fashioned school of humour. Mr. Walpole was a man of gentle bearing, not by any means a robust politician, nor liberally endowed with intellect or eloquence, but pure-minded and upright enough to satisfy the most exacting. It did not appear to him honourable to support a measure because it had been taken up by one's own party, which the party would assuredly have denounced and opposed to the uttermost if it had been brought forward by the other side. Public opinion admired Mr. Walpole, and applauded his decision. Public opinion would have pronounced even more strongly in his favour had it known that at the time of his making this decision and withdrawing from a high official position Mr. Walpole was in circumstances which made the possession of a salary of the utmost importance to him. Had he even swallowed his scruples and held on a little longer, he would have become entitled to a pension. He did not appear to have hesitated a moment. He was a high-minded gentleman; he could very well bear to be poor; he could not bear to surrender his self-respect.

Mr. Disraeli's ingenious Reform Bill was found out in a moment. Someone described its enfranchising clauses as 'fancy franchises;' Mr. Bright introduced the phrase to the House of Commons, and the clauses never recovered the

epithet. It would be useless to go into any of the discussions which took place on this extraordinary Bill. It can hardly be said to have been considered seriously. It had to be got rid of somehow, and therefore Lord John Russell moved an amendment, declaring that no readjustment of the franchise would satisfy the House of Commons or the country which did not provide for a greater extension of the suffrage in cities and boroughs than was contemplated in the Government measure.

Lord John Russell's resolution was carried by 330 votes against 291, or a majority of 39. The Government dissolved Parliament, and appealed to the country. The elections took place during the most critical moments of the war between France and Austria. While such news was arriving as that of the defeat of Magenta, the defeat of Solferino, the entrance of the Emperor of the French and the King of Sardinia into Milan, it was not likely that domestic news of a purely parliamentary interest could occupy all the attention of Englishmen. To many the strength of the Austrian military system had seemed the great bulwark of Conservatism in Europe; and now that was gone, shrivelled like a straw in fire, shattered like a potsherd. In such a condition of things the general election passed over hardly noticed. When it was over, it was found that the Conservatives had gained indeed, but had not gained nearly enough to enable them to hold office, unless by the toleration of their rivals. The rivals soon made up their minds that they had tolerated them long enough. A meeting of the Liberal party was held at Willis's Rooms to arrange on some plan of united action. Lord Palmerston represented one section of the party, Lord John Russell another. Mr. Sidney Herbert spoke for the Peelites. Not a few persons were surprised to find Mr. Bright among the speakers. It was well known that he liked Lord Palmerston little; that it could hardly be said he liked the Tories any less. But Mr. Bright was for a Reform Bill, from whomsoever it should come; and he thought, perhaps, that the Liberal chiefs had learned a lesson. The party contrived to agree upon a principle of action, and a compact was entered into, the effect of which was soon made clear at the meeting of the new Parliament. A vote of want of confidence was at once moved by the Marquis of Hartington, eldest son of the Duke of Devonshire, and even then marked out by common report as a future leader of the Liberal party. Lord Hartington had sat but a short time in the House of Commons, and he did not

then, nor for many years afterwards, show any greater capacity for politics than is shown by an ordinary county member. Nothing could more effectively illustrate one of the peculiarities of the English political system than the choice of the Marquis of Hartington as the figurehead of this important movement against the Tory Government. He was put up to move the vote of want of confidence as the heir of the great Whig house of Devonshire; his appearance in the debate would have carried just as much significance with it if he had simply moved his resolution without an accompanying word. The debate that followed was long and bitter. It was enlivened by more than even the usual amount of personalities. Mr. Disraeli and Sir James Graham had a sharp passage of arms, in the course of which Sir James Graham used an expression that has been often quoted since. He described Mr. Disraeli as 'the Red Indian of debate,' who, 'by the use of the tomahawk, had cut his way to power, and by recurrence to the scalping system hopes to prevent the loss of it.' The scalping system, however, did not succeed this time. The division, when it came on after three nights of discussion, showed a majority of 13 in favour of Lord Hartington's motion.

The Queen invited Lord Granville to form a Ministry. Lord Granville was still a young man to be Prime Minister, considering how much the habits of Parliamentary life had changed since the days of Pitt. He was not much over forty years of age. He had filled many ministerial offices, however, and had an experience in Parliament which may be said to have begun with his majority. After some nine years spent in the House of Commons, the death of his father called him in 1846 to the House of Lords. He made no assumption of commanding abilities, nor had he any pretence to the higher class of eloquence or statesmanship. But he was a thorough man of the world and of Parliament; he understood English ways of feeling and of acting; he was a clever debater, and had the genial art—very useful and very rare in English public life—of keeping even antagonists in good humour. The Queen had naturally thought, in the first instance, of Lord Palmerston and Lord John Russell; but she found it 'a very invidious and unwelcome task' to make a choice between the two statesmen. Her Majesty, therefore, thought a compromise might be best got at if both could be united under the guidance of Lord Granville, the acknowledged leader of the Liberal party in the House of Lords. The attempt was not

successful. Lord John Russell declined to serve under Lord Granville, but declared himself perfectly willing to serve under Lord Palmerston. This declaration at once put an end to Lord Granville's chances, and to the whole difficulty which had been anticipated. Lord Granville was not in the slightest degree impatient to become Prime Minister, and indeed probably felt relieved from a very unwelcome responsibility when he was allowed to accept office under the premiership of Lord Palmerston. Lord Palmerston was now Prime Minister for life. Until his death he held the office with the full approval of Conservatives as well as Liberals; nay, indeed, with much warmer approbation from the majority of the Conservatives than from many of the Liberals.

Palmerston formed a strong Ministry. Mr. Gladstone was Chancellor of the Exchequer; Lord John Russell had the office of Foreign Secretary; Sir G. C. Lewis was Home Secretary; Mr. Sidney Herbert Minister for War. The Duke of Newcastle took charge of the Colonies, Mr. Cardwell accepted the Irish Secretaryship, and Sir Charles Wood was Secretary for India. Lord Palmerston endeavoured to propitiate the Manchester Liberals by offering a seat in the Government to Mr. Cobden and to Mr. Milner Gibson. Mr. Cobden was at the time on his way home from the United States. In his absence he had been elected member for Rochdale; and in his absence, too, the office of President of the Board of Trade in the new Ministry had been put at his disposal. His friends eagerly awaited his return, and, when the steamer bringing him home was near Liverpool, a number of them went out to meet him before his landing. They boarded the steamer, and astonished him with the news that the Tories were out, that the Liberals were in, that he was member for Rochdale, and that Lord Palmerston had offered him a place in the new Ministry. Cobden took the news which related to himself with his usual quiet modesty. He explained afterwards that the office put at his disposal was exactly that which would have best suited him, and in which he thought that he could do some good. He also declared frankly that the salary attached to the office would be a consideration of much importance to him. At the moment he was a poor man. Yet he did not in his own mind hesitate an instant about Lord Palmerston's offer. He disapproved of Palmerston's foreign policy, of his military expenditure, and his love of interfering in the disputes of the Continent; and he felt that he could not

conscientiously accept office under such a leader. He refused the offer decisively, and the chief promoter of the repeal of the corn laws never held any place in an English Administration. Cobden, however, advised his friend, Mr. Milner Gibson, to avail himself of Lord Palmerston's offer, and Mr. Gibson, who had never stood out before the country in so conspicuous a position as an opponent of Lord Palmerston, acted on the advice.

Lord Palmerston had not made any tender of office to Mr. Bright; and he wrote to Mr. Bright frankly explaining his reasons. Mr. Bright had been speaking out too strongly, during his recent reform campaign, to make his presence in the Cabinet acceptable to some of the Whig magnates for whom seats had to be found. It is curious to notice now the conviction, which at that time seemed to be universal, that Mr. Cobden was a much more moderate reformer than Mr. Bright. The impression was altogether wrong. There was, in Mr. Bright's nature, a certain element of Conservatism which showed itself clearly enough the moment the particular reforms which he thought necessary were carried; Mr. Cobden would have gone on advancing in the direction of reform as long as he lived. Not much difference, to be sure, was ever to be noticed between them in public affairs. But where there was any difference, even of speculative opinion, Mr. Cobden went further than Mr. Bright along the path of Radicalism.

The closing days of the year were made memorable by the death of Macaulay. He had been raised to the peerage, and had had some hopes of being able to take occasional part in the stately debates of the House of Lords. But his health almost suddenly broke down, and his voice was never heard in the Upper Chamber. He died prematurely, having only entered on his sixtieth year. Macaulay had had, as he often said himself, a singularly happy life, although it was not without its severe losses and its griefs. His career was one of uninterrupted success. His books brought him fame, influence, social position, and wealth, all at once. He never made a failure. The world only applauded one book more than the other, the second speech more than the first. Macaulay the essayist, Macaulay the historian, Macaulay the ballad-writer, Macaulay the Parliamentary orator, Macaulay the brilliant, inexhaustible talker—he was alike, it might appear, supreme in everything he chose to do or to attempt. Macaulay was undoubtedly a great literary man. He was also a man of singularly noble character. He appears to have enjoyed advancement, success,

fame, and money only because these enabled him to give pleasure and support to the members of his family. He was attached to his family, especially to his sisters, with the tenderest affection. His real nature seems only to have thoroughly shone out when in their society. There he was loving, sportive even to joyous frolicsomeness; a glad schoolboy almost to the very end. He was remarkably generous and charitable even to strangers; his hand was almost always open; but he gave so unostentatiously that it was not until after his death that half his kindly deeds became known. He had a spirit which was absolutely above any of the corrupting temptations of money or rank. He was very poor at one time, but it did not seem to have occurred to him, when he was poor, that money was lacking to the dignity of his intellect and his manhood; or when he was rich that money added to it. He had certain defects of temper and manner rather than of character. He was apt to be overbearing in tone, and to show himself a little too confident of his splendid gifts and acquirements: his marvellous memory, his varied reading, his overwhelming power of argument. He trampled on men's prejudices too heedlessly, was inclined to treat ignorance as if it were a crime, and to make dulness feel that it had cause to be ashamed of itself. These defects only are worth mentioning as they serve to explain some of the misconceptions which were formed of Macaulay by many during his lifetime, and some of the antagonisms which he unconsciously created. Absolutely without literary affectation, undepressed by early poverty, unspoiled by later and almost unequalled success, he was an independent, quiet, self-relying man who, in all his noon of fame, found most happiness in the companionship and the sympathy of those he loved, and who, from first to last, was loved most tenderly by those who knew him best. He was buried in Westminster Abbey in the first week of the new year, and there truly took his place among his peers.

CHAPTER XVII.

LORD PALMERSTON AGAIN.

When Lord Palmerston's Ministry came into power a profound distrust of Louis Napoleon prevailed almost everywhere. The fact that he had been recently our ally did not do much to diminish this distrust. On the contrary, it helped in a

certain sense to increase it. It was to have his revenge for Moscow and the Beresina, people said, that he struck at Russia; and he made us his mere tools in the enterprise. Now he turns upon Austria, to make her atone for other wrongs done against the ambition of the Bonapartes; and he has conquered. What next? Prussia perhaps—or England?

The invasion panic sprang up again here in a moment. The volunteer forces began to increase in numbers and in ardour. Plans of coast fortification and of national defences generally were thrust upon Parliament from various quarters. A feverish anxiety about the security of the island took possession of many minds that were usually tranquil and shrewd enough. The venerable Lord Lyndhurst devoted himself to the work of inflaming the public spirit of England against Louis Napoleon with a vigour of manner and a literary freshness of style well worthy of his earlier and best years. Up to this time there was no evidence in the public opinion of England of any sympathy with Italian independence such as became the fashion a year later. The King of Sardinia, Victor Emanuel, had visited England not long before, and had been received with public addresses and other such demonstrations of admiration here and there; but he had not succeeded in securing the general sympathy of the English public.

The Ministry attempted great things. They undertook a complete remodelling of the Customs system, a repeal of the paper duties, and a Reform Bill. The news that a commercial treaty with France was in preparation broke on the world somewhat abruptly in the early days of 1860. The arrangement was made in a manner to set old formalism everywhere shaking its solemn head and holding up its alarmed hands. The French treaty was made without any direct assistance from professional diplomacy. It was made indeed in despite of professional diplomacy. It was the result of private conversations and an informal agreement between the Emperor of the French and Mr. Cobden. Although Mr. Cobden had never held official position of any kind in England, the Emperor received him very cordially and entered readily into his ideas on the subject of a treaty between England and France, which should remove many of the prohibitions and restrictions then interfering with a liberal interchange of the productions of the two nations. Napoleon the Third was a free-trader, or something nearly approaching to it. His cousin, Prince Napoleon, was still more advanced and more decided in his views of

political economy. The Emperor was, moreover, a good deal under the influence of the distinguished French economist Michel Chevalier. Mr. Cobden had the assistance of all the influence Mr. Gladstone could bring to bear. It is not likely that Lord Palmerston cared much about the French treaty project, but at least he did not oppose it. There were many difficulties in the way on both sides. The French people and the French manufacturing bodies were for the most part opposed to the principles of free trade. So were some of the most influential politicians of the country. M. Thiers was an almost impassioned Protectionist. The Emperor of the French had to enter into the engagement by virtue of his Imperial will and power, and a strong objection was felt in this country just then to any friendly negotiation or arrangement whatever with Louis Napoleon. As soon as it became known that the treaty was in course of negotiation a storm of indignation broke out in this country. Not only the Conservative party but a large portion of the Liberals condemned and denounced the proposed agreement, but the eloquence of Mr. Gladstone and the strength of the Government prevailed against them all. The effect of the treaty, so far as France was concerned, was an engagement virtually to remove all prohibitory duties on all the staples of British manufacture, and to reduce the duties on English coal and coke, bar and pig iron, tools, machinery, yarns, flax, and hemp. England, for her part, proposed to sweep away all duties on manufactured goods, and to reduce greatly the duties on foreign wines.

Mr. Gladstone not only succeeded in carrying this part of his Budget, but he carried, too, as far as the House of Commons was concerned, his important measure for the abolition of the duty on paper. The stamp duty was originally imposed with the object of checking the growth of seditious newspapers. It was reduced, increased, reduced again, and increased again, until in the early part of the century it stood at fourpence on each copy of a newspaper issued. In 1836 it was brought down to the penny, represented by a red stamp on every paper. There was besides this a considerable duty —sixpence, or some such sum—on every advertisement in a newspaper. Finally, there was the heavy duty on the paper material itself. The consequence was that a newspaper was a costly thing. Its possession was the luxury of the rich; those who could afford less had to be content with an occasional read

of a paper. It was common for a number of persons to club together and take in a paper, which they read by turns, the general understanding being that he whose turn came last remained the owner of the journal. It was considered a fair compensation for his late reception of the news that he should come into the full proprietorship of the precious newspaper. The price of a daily paper then was uniformly sixpence; and no sixpenny paper contained anything like the news, or went to a tenth of the daily expense, which is supplied in the one case and undertaken in the other by the penny papers of our day. Gradually the burthens on journalism and on the reading public were reduced. The advertisement duty was abolished; in 1855 the stamp duty was abolished; that is to say, the stamp was either removed altogether, or was allowed to stand as postage. On the strength of this reform many new and cheap journals were started. But it became painfully evident that a newspaper could not be sold profitably for a penny while the duty on the paper-material remained. A powerful agitation was set on foot for its removal, not on behalf of the interests of newspaper speculation, but on behalf of the reading public and of the education of the people.

Mr. Gladstone undertook the congenial task of abolishing the duty on paper. He was met with strong opposition from both sides of the House. The paper manufacturers made it at once a question of protection to their own trade. Vested interests in the newspaper business itself also opposed Mr. Gladstone. The high-priced and well-established journals did not by any means relish the idea of cheap and unfettered competition. A good many men were induced to sustain the cause of the paper-making and journal-selling monopoly. The result was that although Mr. Gladstone carried his resolutions for the abolition of the excise on paper, he only carried them by dwindling majorities. The second reading was carried by a majority of 53; the third by a majority of only 9. The effect of this was to encourage some members of the House of Lords to attempt the task of getting rid of Mr. Gladstone's proposed reform altogether. An amendment to reject the resolutions repealing the tax was proposed by Lord Monteagle, and received the support of Lord Derby and of Lord Lyndhurst. Lord Lyndhurst was then just entering on his eighty-ninth year. His growing infirmities made it necessary that a temporary railing should be constructed in front of his seat in order that he might lean on it and be

supported. But although his physical strength thus needed support his speech gave no evidence of failing intellect. Even his voice could hardly be said to have lost any of its clear, light, musical strength. The question which the House of Lords had to face was somewhat serious. The Commons had repealed a tax; was it constitutionally in the power of the House of Lords to reimpose it? Was not this, it was asked, simply to assert for the House of Lords a taxing power equal to that of the Commons? Was it not to reduce to nothing the principle that taxation and representation go together? Lord Lyndhurst entered into a long and a very telling argument to show that although the peers had abandoned their claim to alter a money bill, they had still a right to refuse their assent to a repeal of taxation, and that in this particular instance they were justified in doing so. The Conservative party in the House of Lords can always carry any division, and they were resolved to show that they could do something. The House of Lords was in an unusually aggressive mood. Mr. Disraeli in one of his novels had irreverently said of the Lords, that when the peers accomplish a division they cackle as if they had laid an egg. On this occasion they were determined to have a division. The majority against the Government was overwhelming, and the repeal of the excise duty on paper was done with for that session.

Lord Palmerston promptly moved in the House of Commons for a committee to ascertain and report on the practice of each House with regard to the several descriptions of Bills imposing or repealing taxes. After two months the committee found by a majority of fourteen a series of resolutions to the effect that the privilege of the House of Commons did not extend so far as to make it actually unconstitutional for the Lords to reject a Bill for the repeal of a tax. Mr. Bright, who was a member of the committee, did not assent to this principle. He prepared a draft report of his own in which he contended for the very reasonable view, that if the Lords might prolong or reimpose a tax by refusing their assent to its repeal when that repeal had been voted by the House of Commons, the House of Commons could not be said to have absolute control over the taxation of the country. The truth is, that if the majority of the House of Commons in favour of the repeal of the paper duties had been anything considerable, the House of Lords would never have ventured to interfere. Not a few of the peers felt convinced that the

majority of the House of Commons would secretly bless them for their intervention. Lord Palmerston followed up the report of the committee by proposing a series of resolutions to reaffirm the position and the claims of the House of Commons in regard to questions of taxation. Such resolutions were not likely to satisfy the more impatient among the Liberals. An appeal was made to the people generally to thunder a national protest against the House of Lords. But the country did not, it must be owned, respond very tumultuously to the invitation. Great public meetings were held in London and the large towns of the North, and much anger was expressed at the conduct of the Lords. Mr. Bright threw his eloquence and his influence into the agitation, and Mr. Gladstone expressed himself strongly in favour of its object. Yet the country did not become greatly excited over the controversy. It did not even enter warmly into the question as to the necessity of abolishing the House of Lords. One indignant writer insisted that if the Lords did not give way the English people would turn them out of Westminster Palace, and strew the Thames with the wrecks of their painted chamber. Language such as this sounded oddly out of tune with the temper of the time. The general conviction of the country was undoubtedly that the Lords had made a mistake, and that it would certainly be necessary to check them if they attempted to repeat it. But the feeling also was that there was not the slightest chance of such a mistake being repeated. The mere fact that so much stir had been made about it was enough to secure the country against any chance of its passing into a precedent. A course of action which Mr. Gladstone denounced as a 'gigantic innovation,' which Lord Palmerston could not approve, which the Liberal party generally condemned, and which the House of Commons made the occasion of a significantly warning resolution, was not in the least likely to be converted by repetition into an established principle and precedent. This was the reason why the country took the whole matter with comparative indifference.

The whole controversy has little political importance now. Perhaps it is most interesting for the evidence it gave that Mr. Gladstone was every day drifting more and more away from the opinions, not merely of his old Conservative associates, but even of his later Whig colleagues. The position which he took up in this dispute was entirely different from that of Lord Palmerston. He condemned without reserve or mitiga-

tion the conduct of the Lords, and he condemned it on the very grounds which made his words most welcome to the Radicals. The first decided adhesion of Mr. Gladstone to the doctrines of the more advanced Liberals is generally regarded as having taken place at a somewhat later period, and in relation to a different question. It would seem, however, that the earliest intimation of the course Mr. Gladstone was thenceforward to tread was his declaration that the constitutional privileges of the representative assembly would not be safe in the hands of the Conservative Opposition. Lord Palmerston, on the other hand, certainly suffered some damage in the eyes of the extreme Liberals. Still Lord Palmerston's resolutions contained in them quite enough to prove to the Lords that they had gone a little too far, and that they must not attempt anything of the kind again. A story used to be told of Lord Palmerston at that time which would not have been out of character if it had been true. Some one, it was said, pressed him to say what he intended to do about the Lords and the reimposition of the paper duties. 'I mean to tell them,' was the alleged reply of Lord Palmerston, 'that it was a very good joke for once, but they must not give it to us again.' This was really the effect of Palmerston's resolutions. The Lords took the hint. They did not try it again. Even in that year, 1860, Mr. Gladstone was able to carry his resolution for removing, in accordance with the provisions of the French Treaty, so much of the Customs duty on imported paper as exceeded the Excise duty on paper made here at home.

Meanwhile the Government had sustained a severe humiliation in another way. They had had to abandon their Reform Bill. The Bill was a moderate and simple scheme of reform. It proposed to lower the county franchise to 10*l.*, and that of the boroughs to 6*l.*; and to make a considerable redistribution of seats. The Bill was brought in on March 1. The second reading was moved on March 19. Mr. Disraeli condemned the measure then, although he did not propose to offer any opposition to it at that stage. He made a long and laboured speech, in which he talked of the Bill as 'a measure of a mediæval character, without the inspiration of the feudal system or the genius of the Middle Ages.' No one knew exactly what this meant; but it was loudly applauded by Mr. Disraeli's followers, and was thought rather fine by some of those who sat on the Ministerial side. Long nights of

debate more or less languid followed. Mr. Disraeli, with his usual sagacity, was merely waiting to see how things would go before he committed himself or his party to any decided opposition. He began very soon to see that there was no occasion for him to take any great trouble in the matter. He and his friends had little more to do than to look on and smile complacently while the chances of the Bill were being hopelessly undermined by some of the followers of the Government. The milder Whigs hated the scheme rather more than the Tories did. Lord Palmerston was well known to be personally indifferent to its fate. Lord Palmerston was not so foreseeing as Mr. Disraeli. The leader of the Opposition knew well enough even then that a Reform Bill of some kind would have to be brought in before long. Mr. Disraeli probably foresaw even then that it might be convenient to his own party one day to seek for the credit of carrying a Radical Reform Bill. He therefore took care not to express any disapproval of the principles of reform in the debates that took place on the second reading of Lord John Russell's Bill. His manner was that of one who looks on scornfully at a bungling attempt to do some piece of work which he could do much better if he had a chance of making the attempt.

Meanwhile the Bill was drifting and floundering on to destruction. If Lord Palmerston had spoken one determined word in its favour the Conservatives would not have taken on themselves the responsibility of a prolonged resistance, and those of the Liberals who secretly detested the measure would not have had the courage to stand up against Lord Palmerston. Very soon they came to understand, or at least to believe, that Lord Palmerston would be rather pleased than otherwise to see the measure brought into contempt. Lord Palmerston took practically no part in the debates. He did actually make a speech at a late period; but, as Mr. Disraeli said with admirable effect, it was a speech not so much 'in support of, as about, the Reform Bill.' Sir George Lewis argued for the Bill so coldly and sadly that Sir E. B. Lytton brought down the laughter and cheers of both sides of the House when he described Lewis as having 'come to bury Cæsar, not to praise him.' The measure was already doomed: it was virtually dead and buried. Notice was given of amendment after amendment, chiefly or altogether by professing Liberals. The practice of obstructing the progress of the Bill by incessant speech-making was introduced and made to work with ominous

effect. Some of the more boisterous of the Tories began to treat the whole thing as a good piece of fun. Once an attempt was made to get the House counted out during the progress of the debate. It would be a capital means of reducing the whole discussion to an absurdity, some members thought, if the House could actually be counted out during a debate on the Reform Bill. A Bill to remould the whole political constitution of the country—and the House of Commons not caring enough about the subject to contribute forty listeners, or even forty patient watchers, within the precincts of Westminster Palace! When the attempt to count did not succeed in the ordinary way, it occurred to the genius of some of the Conservatives that the object might be accomplished by a little gentle and not unacceptable violence. A number of stout squires therefore got round the door in the lobby, and endeavoured by sheer physical obstruction to prevent zealous members from re-entering the House. It will be easily understood what the temper of the majority was when horse-play of this kind could even be attempted. At length it was evident that the Bill could not pass; that the talk which was in preparation must smother it. The moment the Bill got into committee there would be amendments on every line of it, and every member could speak as often as he pleased. The session was passing; the financial measures could not be postponed or put aside; the opponents of the Reform Bill, open and secret, had the Government at their mercy. On Monday, June 11, Lord John Russell announced that the Government had made up their minds to withdraw the Bill. Thenceforward it was understood that Lord Palmerston would have no more of Reform. There was to be no Reform Bill while Lord Palmerston lived.

The Queen's Speech at the opening of Parliament on January 24, 1860, mentioned, among other things, the renewal of disturbances in China. The treaty of Tien-tsin, which had been arranged by Lord Elgin and Baron Gros, contained a clause providing for the exchange of the ratifications at Pekin within a year from the date of the signature, which took place in June 1858. Lord Elgin returned to England, and his brother, Mr. Frederick Bruce, was appointed in March 1859 Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary to China. Mr. Bruce was directed to proceed by way of the Peiho to Tien-tsin, and thence to Pekin to exchange the ratifications of the treaty. Lord Malmesbury, who was

then Foreign Secretary, pointed out that the Chinese authorities having the strongest objection to the presence of an Envoy in Pekin, would probably try to interpose all manner of delays and difficulties; and impressed upon Mr. Bruce that he was not to be put off from going to the capital. Instructions were sent out from England at the same time to Admiral Hope, the Naval Commander-in-Chief in China, to provide a sufficient force to accompany Mr. Bruce to the mouth of the Peiho.

The Peiho river flows from the highlands on the west into the Gulf of Pecheli, at the north-east corner of the Chinese dominions. The capital of the Empire is about one hundred miles inland from the mouth of the Peiho. It does not stand on that river, which flows past it at some distance westward, but it is connected with the river by means of a canal. The town of Tien-tsin stands on the Peiho near its junction with one of the many rivers that flow into it, and about forty miles from the mouth. The entrance to the Peiho was defended by the Taku forts. On June 20, 1859, Mr. Bruce and the French Envoy reached the mouth of the Peiho with Admiral Hope's fleet, some nineteen vessels in all, to escort them. They found the forts defended; some negotiations and inter-communications took place, and a Chinese official from Tien-tsin came to Mr. Bruce and endeavoured to obtain some delay or compromise. Mr. Bruce became convinced that the condition of things predicted by Lord Malmesbury was coming about, and that the Chinese authorities were only trying to defeat his purpose. He called on Admiral Hope to clear a passage for the vessels. When the Admiral brought up his gunboats the forts opened fire. The Chinese artillerymen showed unexpected skill and precision. Four of the gunboats were almost immediately disabled. All the attacking vessels got aground. Admiral Hope attempted to storm the forts. The attempt was a complete failure. Admiral Hope himself was wounded; so was the commander of the French vessel which had contributed a contingent to the storming party. The attempt to force a passage of the river was given up, and the mission to Pekin was over for the present.

It seems only fair to say that the Chinese at the mouth of the Peiho cannot be accused of perfidy. They had mounted the forts and barricaded the river openly and even ostentatiously. The English Admiral knew for days and days that the forts were armed, and that the passage of the river was obstructed.

Some of the English officers who were actually engaged in the attempt of Admiral Hope frankly repudiated the idea of any treachery on the part of the Chinese, or any surprise on their own side. They knew perfectly well, they said, that the forts were about to resist the attempt to force a way for the Envoys up the river.

It will be easily imagined that the news created a deep sensation in England. People in general made up their minds at once that the matter could not be allowed to rest there, and that the mission to Pekin must be enforced. At the same time a strong feeling prevailed that the Envoy, Mr. Bruce, had been imprudent and precipitate in his conduct. For this, however, it seems more just to blame Lord Malmesbury than Mr. Bruce, who might well have thought that his instructions left him no alternative but to force his way. Before the whole question came to be discussed in Parliament the Conservatives had gone out and the Liberals had come in.

The English and French Governments determined that the men who had made the treaty of Tien-tsin—Lord Elgin and Baron Gros—should be sent back to insist on its reinforcement. Sir Hope Grant was appointed to the military command of our land forces, and General Cousin de Montauban, afterwards Count Palikao, commanded the soldiers of France. The Chinese, to do them justice, fought very bravely, but of course they had no chance whatever against such forces as those commanded by the English and French generals. The allies captured the Taku forts, occupied Tien-tsin, and marched on Pekin. The Chinese Government endeavoured to negotiate for peace, and to interpose any manner of delay, diplomatic or otherwise, between the allies and their progress to the capital. Lord Elgin consented at last to enter into negotiations at Tungchow, a walled town ten or twelve miles nearer than Pekin. Before the negotiations took place, Lord Elgin's secretaries, Mr. Parkes and Mr. Loch, some English officers, Mr. Bowlby, the correspondent of the *Times*, and some members of the staff of Baron Gros, were treacherously seized by the Chinese while under a flag of truce and dragged off to various prisons. Mr. Parkes and Mr. Loch, with eleven of their companions, were afterwards released, after having been treated with much cruelty and indignity, but thirteen of the prisoners died of the horrible ill-treatment they received. Lord Elgin refused to negotiate until the prisoners had been returned, and the allied armies were actually at one fo the

great gates of Pekin, and had their guns in position to blow the gate in, when the Chinese acceded to their terms. The gate was surrendered, the allies entered the city, and the English and French flags were hoisted side by side on the walls of Pekin. It was only after entering the city that Lord Elgin learned of the murder of the captives. He then determined that the Summer Palace should be burnt down as a means of impressing the mind of the Chinese authorities generally with some sense of the danger of treachery and foul play. Two days were occupied in the destruction of the palace. It covered an area of many miles. Gardens, temples, small lodges, and pagodas, groves, grottoes, lakes, bridges, terraces, artificial hills, diversified the vast space. All the artistic treasures, all the curiosities, archæological and other, that Chinese wealth and Chinese taste, such as it was, could bring together, had been accumulated in this magnificent pleasaunce. The surrounding scenery was beautiful. The high mountains of Tartary ramparted one side of the enclosure. The buildings were set on fire; the whole place was given over to destruction. A monument was raised with an inscription in Chinese, setting forth that such was the reward of perfidy and cruelty.

Very different opinions were held in England as to the destruction of the Imperial palace. To many it seemed an act of unintelligible and unpardonable vandalism. Lord Elgin explained, that if he did not demand the surrender of the actual perpetrators, it was because he knew full well that no difficulty would have been made about giving him a seeming satisfaction. The Chinese Government would have selected for vicarious punishment, in all probability, a crowd of mean and unfortunate wretches who had nothing to do with the murders, who perhaps had never heard that such murders were done, and who would possibly even go to their death without the slightest notion of the reason why they were chosen out for such a doom. Most of our actions in the war were unjustifiable; Lord Elgin's was the one for which, perhaps, the best case could be made out by a moralist. It is somewhat singular that so many persons should have been roused to indignation by the destruction of a building who took with perfect composure the unjust invasion of a country. The allied powers now of course had it all their own way. England established her right to have an envoy in Pekin, whether the Chinese liked it or not. China had to pay a war indemnity, and a large sum of money as compensation to the families

of the murdered prisoners and to those who had suffered injuries, and to make an apology for the attack by the garrison of the Taku forts. Perhaps the most important gain to Europe from the war was the knowledge that Pekin was not by any means so large a city as we had all imagined it to be, and that it was on the whole rather a crumbling and tumble-down sort of place.

The same year saw also the troubles in the mountain terraces of the Lebanon, which likewise led to the combined intervention of England and France. The disturbances arose out of the rivalries and quarrels between two sects, the Maronites, who were Christians, and the Druses, who were neither Christians nor Mussulmans. The Turkish commander disarmed many of the Maronites near Beyrout, and seems then to have abandoned them to the Druses, who massacred them all. In July the fanatical spirit spread to Damascus. A mob of Turkish fanatics made a general attack upon the Christian quarter, and burned the greater part of it down. The consulates of France, Russia, Austria, Holland, Belgium, and Greece were destroyed. Nearly two thousand Christians were massacred in that one day's work. Many of the respectable Mussulman inhabitants of Damascus, the famous Algerian chief Abd-el-Kader among them, were most generous and brave in their attempts to save and shelter the unfortunate Christians; but the Turkish Governor of Damascus, although he had a strong military force at his disposal, made no serious effort to interfere with the work of massacre; and, as might be expected, his supineness was construed by the mob as an official approval of their doings, and they murdered with all the more vigour and zest.

The news of the massacre in the Lebanon naturally created a profound sensation in England. England and France took strong and decisive steps. They resolved upon instant intervention to restore tranquillity in the Lebanon. A convention was drawn up, to which all the Great Powers of Europe agreed, and which Turkey had to accept. By the convention England and France were entrusted with the duty of restoring order. France undertook to supply the troops required in the first instance; further requirements were to be met as the intervening Powers might think fit. The intervening Powers pledged themselves reciprocally not to seek for any territorial advantage or exclusive influence. England sent out Lord Dufferin to act as her Commissioner; and Lord Dufferin

accomplished his task with as much spirit as judgment. The Turkish Government, to do it justice, had at last shown great energy in punishing the authors and the abettors of the massacres. The Sultan sent out Fuad Pasha, his Minister for Foreign Affairs, to the Lebanon; and Fuad Pasha showed no mercy to the promoters of the disturbances, or even to the highly-placed official abettors of them. The governor of Damascus and the commander of the Turkish troops suffered death for their part in the transactions, and about sixty persons were publicly executed in the city, of whom the greater number belonged to the Turkish police force. When the intervention had succeeded in thoroughly restoring order, the representatives of the Great Powers assembled in Constantinople unanimously agreed that a Christian governor of the Lebanon should be appointed in subordination to the Sultan; and the Sultan had, of course, no choice but to agree to this proposition. The French troops evacuated Syria in June 1861, and thereby much relieved the minds of many Englishmen, who had long forgotten all about the domestic affairs of the Lebanon in their alarm lest the French Imperial troops, having once set foot in Syria, should not easily be induced to quit the country again.

It would hardly be fitting to close the history of this eventful year without giving a few lines to record the peaceful end of a stormy life. Quietly in his Kensington home passed away, in the late autumn of this year, Thomas Cochrane—the gallant Dundonald, the hero of the Basque Roads, the volunteer who lent his genius and his courage to the cause of Brazil, of Chili, and of Greece; a sailor of the Elizabethan mould. Lord Dundonald had been the victim of cruel, although not surely intentional, injustice. He was accused of having had a share in the famous stockjobbing frauds of 1814; he was tried, found guilty, sentenced to fine and imprisonment; expelled from the House of Commons, dismissed from the service which he had helped to make yet more illustrious than he found it; and deprived of all his public honours. He lived to see his innocence believed in as well by his enemies as by his friends. William IV. reinstated him in his naval rank, and Queen Victoria had the congenial task of completing the restoration of his well-won honours. It was not, however, until many years after his death that the country fully acquitted itself of the mere money debt which it owed to Lord Dundonald and his family. Cochrane was a Radical in

politics, and for some years sat as a colleague of Sir Francis Burdett in the representation of Westminster. He carried on in the House of Commons many a bitter argument with Mr. John Wilson Croker, when the latter was Secretary to the Admiralty. It cannot be doubted that Cochrane's political views and his strenuous way of asserting them, made him many enemies, and that some men were glad of the opportunity for revenge which was given by the accusation got up against him. His was an impatient spirit, little suited for the discipline of parliamentary life. His tongue was often bitter, and he was too apt to assume that a political opponent must be a person unworthy of respect. Even in his own service he was impatient of rebuke. To those under his command he was always genial and brotherly; but to those above him he was sometimes wanting in that patient submission which is an essential quality of those who would learn how to command with most success. Cochrane's true place was on his quarter-deck; his opportunity came in the extreme moment of danger. Then his spirit asserted itself. His gift was that which wrenches success out of the very jaws of failure; he saw his way most clearly when most others began to despair. His later life had been passed in retirement. It was his death, on October 30, 1860, which recalled to the mind of the living generation the hero whose exploits had divided the admiration of their fathers with those of Nelson, of Collingwood, and of Sidney Smith. A new style of naval warfare has come up since those days, and perhaps Cochrane may be regarded as the last of the old sea-kings.

CHAPTER XVIII.

THE CIVIL WAR IN AMERICA.

Civil war broke out in the United States. Abraham Lincoln's election as President, brought about by the party divisions of the Southerners among themselves, seemed to the South the beginning of a new order of things, in which they and their theories of government would no longer predominate. The struggle became one for life or death between slavery and the principles of modern society. Slavery existed in the Southern States, though it had ceased long to exist in the North. The two systems were really incompatible, but the inevitable

struggle between the supporters and the opponents of slavery might have been indefinitely delayed if the Southern States, the Slave States, had not decided to secede from the Union, to cut themselves adrift from the abolitionist North, and form a slave-holding confederation of their own.

The Southern States, led by South Carolina, seceded. Their delegates assembled at Montgomery, in Alabama, on February 4, 1861, to agree upon a constitution. A Southern confederation was formed, with Mr. Jefferson Davis as its President. Even then war might not have taken place; the North and South might have come to some agreement but for the impetuous action of South Carolina. This State had been the first to secede, and it was the first to commit an act of war. The traveller in South Carolina, as he stands on one of the quays of Charleston and looks towards the Atlantic, sees the sky line across the harbour broken by a heavy-looking solid square fort, which soon became famous in the war. This was Fort Sumter, a place built on an artificial island, with walls some sixty feet high and eight to twelve feet thick. It was in the occupation of the Federal Government, as of course were the defences of all the harbours of the Union. It is, perhaps, not necessary to say that while each State made independently its local laws, the Federal Government and Congress had the charge of all business of national interest, customs duties, treaties, the army and navy, and the coast defences. The excited Secessionists of South Carolina began to bombard the fort. The little garrison had no means of resistance, and after a harmless bombardment of two days it surrendered. The Federal President, Abraham Lincoln, had been anxious if possible to enable North and South to come to some terms without going to war. After the fall of Sumter, however, there was no prospect of any peaceful settlement of the quarrel. There was an end to all negotiations; thence-forward only strokes could arbitrate.

Four days after, President Lincoln called for seventy-five thousand men to volunteer in re-establishing the Federal authority over the rebel States. President Davis immediately announced his intention to issue letters of marque. President Lincoln declared the Southern ports under blockade. On May 8 Lord John Russell announced in the House of Commons, that after consulting the law officers of the Crown the Government were of opinion that the Southern Confederacy must be recognised as a belligerent power. On May 13

the neutrality proclamation was issued by the Government, warning all subjects of her Majesty from enlisting, on land or sea, in the service of Federals or Confederates, supplying munitions of war, equipping vessels for privateering purposes, engaging in transport service, or doing any other act calculated to afford assistance to either belligerent.

At first the feeling of Englishmen was almost unanimously in favour of the North. It was thought that the Southern States would be allowed quietly to secede, and most Englishmen did not take a great interest in the matter, or when they did, were inclined to regard the Southerners as a turbulent and troublesome set, who had better be permitted to go off with their peculiar institution and keep it all to themselves. When, however, it became apparent that the secession must lead to war, then many of the same Englishmen began to blame the North for making the question any cause of disturbance to the world. There was a kind of impatient feeling, as if we and the world in general had no right to be troubled with these American quarrels, as if it were unfair to us that our cotton trade should be interrupted and we ourselves put to inconvenience for a dispute about secession. There clearly would have been no war and no disturbance if only the North had agreed to let the South go, and therefore people on this side of the Atlantic set themselves to find good cause for blaming the statesmen who did not give in to anything rather than disturb the world with their obstinacy and their Union. Out of this condition of feeling came the resolve to find the North in the wrong; and out of that resolve came with many the discovery that the Northern statesmen were all hypocrites. Suddenly, as if to decide wavering minds, an event was reported which made hosts of admirers for the South in England. The battle of Bull Run took place on July 21, 1861, and the raw levies of the North were defeated, thrown into confusion, and in some instances driven into ignominious flight.

This was not very surprising. The Southerners had always a taste for soldiering, and had kept up their state militia systems with an energy and exactness which the business-men of the North had neither the time nor the inclination to imitate. It was not very surprising if some of the hastily-raised Northern regiments of volunteers should have proved wretched soldiers, and should have yielded to the sudden influence of panic. But when the news reached

England a very flame of enthusiasm leaped up for the brave South, which, though so small in numbers, had contrived with such spirit and ease to defeat the 'Yankees.' It is important for the fair understanding and appreciation of the events that followed, to remember that there was, among all the advocates of the South in England, a very general conviction that the North was sure to be defeated and broken up, and was therefore in no sense a formidable power. It is well also to bear in mind that there were only two European States which entertained this feeling and allowed it to be everywhere understood. The Southern scheme found support only in England and in France. In all other European countries the sympathy of people and Government alike went with the North. In most places the sympathy arose from a detestation of slavery. In Russia, or at least with the Russian Government, it arose from a dislike of rebellion. The effect was that assurances of friendship came from all civilised countries to the Northern States except from England and France alone. One of the latest instructions given by Cavour on his deathbed in this year was that an assurance should be sent to the Federal Government that Italy could give its sympathies to no movement which tended to the perpetuation of slavery. The Pope, Pius IX., and Cardinal Antonelli repeatedly expressed their hopes for the success of the Northern cause. On the other hand, the Emperor of the French fully believed that the Southern cause was sure to triumph, and that the Union would be broken up; he was even very willing to hasten what he assumed to be the unavoidable end. He was anxious that England should join with him in some measures to facilitate the success of the South by recognising the Government of the Southern Confederation. He had afterwards reason to curse the day when he reckoned on the break-up of the Union, and persuaded himself that there was no occasion to take account of the Northern strength. Yet in France the people in general were on the side of the North. Only the Emperor and his Government were on that of the South. In England, on the other hand, the vast majority of what are called the influential classes came to be heart and soul with the South, and strove to bring or force the Government to the same side.

At first the Northern States counted with absolute confidence upon the sympathy of England. The one reproach Englishmen had always been casting in their face was that

they did not take any steps to put down slavery. It is easy to understand, therefore, how Mr. Lincoln and his friends counted on the sympathy of the English Government and the English people, and how surprised they were when they found English statesmen, journalists, preachers, and English society generally deriding their misfortunes and apparently wishing for the success of their foes. Their surprise changed into a feeling of bitter disappointment, and that gave place to an angry temper, which exaggerated every symptom of ill-will, distorted every fact, and saw wrong even where there only existed an honest purpose to do right.

It was while this temper was beginning to light up on both sides of the Atlantic that the unfortunate affair of the *Trent* occurred. The Confederate Government was anxious to have a regular envoy in London and another in Paris. Mr. Slidell, a prominent Southern lawyer and politician, was to represent the South at the Court of the Emperor Napoleon, provided he could obtain recognition there; and Mr. James Murray Mason, the author of the Fugitive Slave Law, was to be despatched with a similar mission to the Court of Queen Victoria. The two Southern envoys escaped together from Charleston, one dark and wet October night, in a small steamer, and got to Havana. There they took passage for Southampton in the English mail steamer *Trent*. The United States sloop of war, *San Jacinto*, happened to be returning from the African coast about the same time. Her commander, Captain Wilkes, was a somewhat hot-tempered and indiscreet officer. He learned at Havana that the Confederate agents, with their secretaries, were on their way to Europe. He intercepted the *Trent*. An armed party was then sent on board, and the Confederate envoys were seized, with their secretaries, and carried as prisoners on board the *San Jacinto*, despite the protest of the captain of the English steamer and from under the protection of the English flag. The prisoners were first carried to New York, and then confined in one of the forts in Boston harbour. Now, there cannot be the slightest doubt of the illegality of this proceeding on the part of Captain Wilkes. Mr. Lincoln at once declared that the act of Captain Wilkes could not be sustained. Lord Russell demanded the surrender of the prisoners, and on January 1, 1862, the Confederate envoys were given up on the demand of the British Government, and sailed for Europe. Unfortunately, however, a great deal of harm had been done

in the meantime. Popular clamour in the United States had entirely approved of the action of Captain Wilkes. Lord Palmerston's Government acted, from the first, as if an instant appeal to arms must be necessary. The episode was singularly unfortunate in its effect upon the temper of the majority in England and America. From that moment there was a formidable party in England who detested the North, and a formidable party in the North who detested England.

The cause of peace between nations lost a good friend at the close of 1861. The Prince Consort died. The death of the Prince, lamentable in every way, was especially to be deplored at a time when influential counsels tending towards forbearance and peace were much needed in England. But it may be said, with literal truth, that when the news of the Prince's death was made known, its possible effect on the public affairs of England was forgotten or unthought of in the regret for the personal loss. Outside the precincts of Windsor Castle itself the event was wholly unexpected. Perhaps even within the precincts of the Castle there was little expectation up to the last that such a calamity was so near. The public had only learned a few days before that the Prince was unwell. On December 8 the *Court Circular* mentioned that he was confined to his room by a feverish cold. Then it was announced that he was 'suffering from fever, unattended by unfavourable symptoms, but likely, from its symptoms, to continue for some time.' This latter announcement appeared in the form of a bulletin on Wednesday, December 11. About the midnight of Saturday, the 14th, there was some sensation and surprise created throughout London by the tolling of the great bell of St. Paul's. Not many people even suspected the import of the unusual sound. It signified the death of the Prince Consort. He died at ten minutes before eleven that Saturday night, in the presence of the Queen, the Prince of Wales, and the Princesses Alice and Helena. The fever had become fierce and wasting on Friday, and from that time it was only a descent to death. Congestion of the lungs set in, the consequences of exhaustion; the Prince fell into utter weakness, and died conscious but without pain. He knew the Queen to the last. His latest look was turned to her.

The Prince Consort was little more than forty-two years of age when he died. He had always seemed to be in good, although not perhaps robust, health; and he had led a singularly temperate life. No one in the kingdom seemed

less likely to be prematurely cut off; and his death came on the whole country with the shock of an utter surprise. The regret was universal; and the deepest regret was for the wife he had loved so dearly, and whom he was condemned so soon to leave behind. Every testimony has spoken to the singularly tender and sweet affection of the loving home the Queen and Prince had made for themselves. A domestic happiness rare even among the obscurest was given to them. It is one of the necessities of royal position that marriage should be seldom the union of hearts. The choice is limited by considerations which do not affect people in private life. The convenience of States has to be taken into account; the possible likings and dislikings of peoples whom perhaps the bride and bridegroom have never seen, and are never destined to see. A marriage among princes is, in nine cases out of ten, a marriage of convenience only. Seldom indeed is it made, as that of the Queen was, wholly out of love. Seldom is it even in love-matches when the instincts of love are not deceived and the affection grows stronger with the days. Everyone knew that this had been the strange good fortune of the Queen of England. There was something poetic, romantic in the sympathy with which so many faithful and loving hearts turned to her in her hour of unspeakable distress.

The controversy about the *Trent* was hardly over when Lord Russell and Mr. Adams were engaged in the more prolonged and far more serious controversy about the Confederate privateers. Some Confederate cruisers, the *Savannah*, the *Sumter*, the *Nashville*, and the *Petrel* scoured the seas for a while as privateers, and did some damage to the shipping of the Northern States. These were, however, but small vessels, and each had only a short run of it. The first privateer which became really formidable to the shipping of the North was a vessel called in her earlier history the *Oreto*, but afterwards better known as the *Florida*. Within three months she had captured fifteen vessels. Thirteen of these she burnt, and the other two were converted into cruisers by the Confederate Government. The *Florida* was built in Birkenhead, nominally for the use of the Italian Government. She got out of the Mersey without detention or difficulty, although the American Minister had warned our Government of her real purpose. From that time Great Britain became what an American writer calls without any exaggeration 'the naval

base of the Confederacy.' As fast as shipbuilders could work, they were preparing in British shipping yards a privateer navy for the Confederate Government. Mr. Gladstone said, in a speech which was the subject of much comment, that Jefferson Davis had made a navy. The statement was at all events not literally correct. The English shipbuilders made the navy. Mr. Davis only ordered it and paid for it. Only seven Confederate privateers were really formidable to the United States, and of these five were built in British dockyards. We are not including in the list any of the actual war-vessels, the rams and ironclads, that British energy was preparing for the Confederate Government. We are now speaking merely of the privateers.

Of these privateers the most famous by far was the *Alabama*. It was the fortune of this vessel to be the occasion of the establishment of a new rule in the law of nations. It had nearly been her fortune to bring England and the United States into war. The *Alabama* was built expressly for the Confederate service in one of the dockyards of the Mersey. She was built by the house of Laird, a firm of the greatest reputation in the shipbuilding trade, and whose former head was the representative of Birkenhead in the House of Commons. While in process of construction she was called the '290;' and it was not until she had put to sea and hoisted the Confederate flag, and Captain Semmes, formerly commander of the *Sumter*, had appeared on her deck in full Confederate uniform, that she took the name of the *Alabama*. During her career the *Alabama* captured nearly seventy Northern vessels. Her plan was always the same. She hoisted the British flag, and thus decoyed her intended victim within her reach; then she displayed the Confederate colours and captured her prize. But the *Alabama* did not do much fighting; she preyed on merchant vessels that could not fight. Only twice, so far as we know, did she engage in a fight. The first time was with the *Hatteras*, a small blockading ship whose broadside was so unequal to that of the *Alabama* that she was sunk in a quarter of an hour. The second time was with the United States ship of war *Kearsarge*, whose size and armaments were about equal to her own. The fight took place off the French shore, near Cherbourg, and the career of the *Alabama* was finished in an hour. The Confederate rover was utterly shattered, and went down. Captain Semmes was saved by an English steam yacht, and brought to England to be

made a hero for a while, and then forgotten. The cruise of the *Alabama* had lasted nearly two years. During this time she had contrived to drive American commerce from the seas.

The United States Government complained that the *Alabama* was practically an English vessel. She was built by English builders in an English dockyard; she was manned for the most part by an English crew; her guns were English; her gunners were English; many of the latter belonged to the Royal Naval Reserve, and were actually receiving pay from the English Government; she sailed under the English flag, was welcomed in English harbours, and never was in, or even saw, a Confederate port. Mr. Adams called the attention of the Government in good time to the fact that the *Alabama* was in course of construction in the dockyard of Messrs. Laird, and that she was intended for the Confederate Service. Indeed, there never was the slightest doubt on the mind of anyone about the business for which the vessel in the Birkenhead dockyard was destined. There was no attempt at concealment in the matter. Newspaper paragraphs described the gradual construction of the Confederate cruiser, as if it were a British vessel of war that Messrs. Laird had in hand. Whatever technical difficulties might have intervened, it is clear that no real doubt on the mind of the Government had anything to do with the delays that took place. At last, Lord Russell asked for the opinion of the Queen's Advocate. Time was pressing; the cruiser was nearly ready for sea. Everything seemed to be against us. The Queen's Advocate happened to be sick at the moment, and there was another delay. At last he gave his opinion that the vessel ought to be detained. The opinion came just too late. The *Alabama* had got to sea; her cruise of nearly two years began. She went upon her destroying course with the cheers of English sympathisers and the rapturous tirades of English newspapers glorifying her. When Mr. Bright brought on the question in the House of Commons, Mr. Laird declared that he would rather be known as the builder of a dozen *Alabamas*, than be a man who, like Mr. Bright, had set class against class; and the majority of the House applauded him to the echo. Lord Palmerston peremptorily declared that in this country we were not in the habit of altering our laws to please a foreign State; a declaration which came with peculiar effect from the author of the abortive Conspiracy Bill, got up to propitiate the Emperor of the French.

The building of vessels for the Confederates began to go on with more boldness than ever. Two iron rams of the most formidable kind were built and about to be launched in 1863 for the purpose of forcibly opening the Southern ports and destroying the blockading vessels. Mr. Adams kept urging on Lord Russell, and for a long time in vain, that something must be done to stop their departure. Lord Russell at first thought the British Government could not interfere in any way. Mr. Adams pressed and protested, and at length was informed that the matter was 'now under the serious consideration of her Majesty's Government.' At last, on September 5, Mr. Adams wrote to tell Lord Russell that one of the ironclad vessels was on the point of departure from this kingdom on its hostile errand against the United States; and added, 'it would be superfluous in me to point out to your lordship that this is war.' On September 8 Mr. Adams received the following: 'Lord Russell presents his compliments to Mr. Adams, and has the honour to inform him that instructions have been issued which will prevent the departure of the two ironclad vessels from Liverpool.' No more Confederate war-ships sailed from English ports after this. But Lord Russell declined peremptorily to admit that the English Government were in any way responsible for what had been done by the Confederate cruisers, or that England was called on to alter her domestic law to please her neighbours. Mr. Adams therefore dropped the matter for the time, intimating, however, that it was only put aside for the moment. The United States Government had their hands full just then, and in any case could afford to wait. The question would keep. The British Government were glad to be relieved from the discussion and from the necessity of arguing the various points with Mr. Adams, and were under the pleasing impression that they had heard the last of it.

In the meantime the war had been going badly for the North, and her enemies began to think that her fate was sealed. The Emperor Napoleon was working hard to get England to join with him in recognising the South. Mr. Roebuck had at one time a motion in the House of Commons calling on the English Government to make up their minds to the recognition; and Mr. Adams had explained again and again that such a step would mean war with the Northern States. Mr. Adams was satisfied that the fate of Mr. Roebuck's motion would depend on the military events of a

few days. He was right. The motion was never pressed to a division; for during its progress there came at one moment the news that General Grant had taken Vicksburg on the Mississippi, and that General Meade had defeated the Southern General Lee at Gettysburg. That was the turning point of the war, although not many saw it even then. The South never had a chance after that hour. There was no more said in this country about the recognition of the Southern Confederation, and the Emperor of the French was thenceforward free to follow out his plans as far as he could and alone.

The Emperor Napoleon, however, was for the present confident enough and quite content with the success of his Mexican expedition. Mexico had been for a long time in a very disorganised state. The Constitutional Government of Benito Juarez had come into power, and got into difficulties with several foreign states, England among the rest, over the claims of foreign creditors, and wrongs committed against foreign subjects. Lord Russell, who had acted with great forbearance towards Mexico up to this time, now agreed to co-operate with France and Spain in exacting reparation from Juarez. But he explained clearly that England would have nothing to do with upsetting the Government of Mexico, or imposing any European system on the Mexican people. The Emperor of the French, however, had already made up his mind that he would establish a sort of feudatory monarchy in Mexico. He therefore persuaded the Archduke Maximilian, brother of the Emperor of Austria, to accept the crown of the monarchy he proposed to set up in Mexico. The Archduke was a man of pure and noble character, but evidently wanting in strength of mind, and he agreed after some hesitation to accept the offer. At last the designs of the French Government became evident to the English and Spanish Plenipotentiaries, and England and Spain withdrew from the Convention. The Emperor of the French overran a certain portion of Mexico with his troops, he occupied the capital, and he set up the Mexican Empire with Maximilian as Emperor. French troops remained to protect the new Empire. Against all this the United States Government protested from time to time. They disclaimed any intention to prevent the Mexican people from establishing an empire if they thought fit; but they pointed out that grave inconveniences must arise if a foreign Power like France persisted in occupying with her troops any part of the American continent. However, the Emperor

Napoleon, complacently satisfied that the United States were going to pieces, and that the Southern Confederacy would be his friend and ally, received the protests of the American Government with unveiled indifference. At last the tide in American affairs turned. The Confederacy crumbled away—Richmond was taken ; Lee surrendered ; Jefferson Davis was a prisoner. Then the United States returned to the Mexican Question, and the American Government informed Louis Napoleon that it would be inconvenient, gravely inconvenient, if he were not to withdraw his soldiers from Mexico. A significant movement of American troops, under a renowned General, then flushed with success, was made in the direction of the Mexican frontier. There was nothing for Louis Napoleon but to withdraw. Up to the last he had been rocked in the vainest hopes. Long after the end had become patent to every other eye, he assured an English member of Parliament that he looked upon the Mexican Empire as the greatest creation of his reign.

The Mexican Empire lasted two months and a week after the last of the French troops had been withdrawn. Maximilian endeavoured to raise an army of his own, and to defend himself against the daily increasing strength of Juarez. He showed all the courage which might have been expected from his race, and from his own previous history. But in an evil hour for himself, and yielding, it is stated, to the persuasion of a French officer, he had issued a decree that all who resisted his authority in arms should be shot. By virtue of this monstrous ordinance, Mexican officers of the regular army, taken prisoners while resisting, as they were bound to do, the invasion of a European prince, were shot like brigands. The Mexican general, Ortega, was one of those thus shamefully done to death. When Juarez conquered, and Maximilian, in his turn, was made a prisoner, he was tried by court-martial, condemned, and shot. His death created a profound sensation in Europe. He had in all his previous career won respect everywhere, and even in the Mexican scheme he was universally regarded as a noble victim who had been deluded to his doom. The conduct of Juarez in thus having him put to death raised a cry of horror from all Europe ; but it must be allowed that, by the fatal decree which he had issued, the unfortunate Maximilian had left himself liable to a stern retaliation. There was cold truth in the remark made at the time, that if he had been only General and not Archduke Maximilian his fate would not have aroused so much surprise or anger.

We need not follow any further the history of the American Civil War. The restoration of the Union, the assassination of President Lincoln, and the emancipation of the coloured race from all the disqualifications, as well as all the bondage, of the slave system belong to American and not to English history, But the *Alabama* dispute led to consequences which are especially important to England, and which shall be described in their due time.

CHAPTER XIX.

THE LAST OF LORD PALMERSTON.

During the later months of his life the Prince Consort had been busy in preparing for another great International Exhibition to be held in London. It was arranged that this Exhibition should open on May 1, 1862; and although the sudden death of the Prince Consort greatly interfered with the prospects of the undertaking, it was not thought right that there should be any postponement of the opening. The Exhibition building was erected in South Kensington, according to a design by Captain Fowke. It certainly was not a beautiful structure. It was a huge and solid erection of brick, with two enormous domes, each in shape strikingly like the famous crinoline petticoat of the period. The Fine Arts department of the Exhibition was a splendid collection of pictures and statues. The display of products of all kinds from the Colonies was rich, and was a novelty, for the colonists contributed little indeed to the Exhibition of 1851, and the intervening eleven years had been a period of immense colonial advance. But no one felt any longer any of the hopes which floated dreamily and gracefully round the scheme of 1851. There was no talk or thought of a reign of peace any more. The Civil War was raging in America. The Continent of Europe was trembling all over with the spasms of war just done, and the premonitory symptoms of war to come. The Exhibition of 1862 had to rely upon its intrinsic merits, like any ordinary show or any public market. Poetry and prophecy had nothing to say to it.

England was left for some time to an almost absolute inactivity. Between Palmerston and the Radical party in England there was a growing coldness. He had not only thrown over Reform himself, but he had apparently induced most of his colleagues to accept the understanding that nothing more was

to be said about it. He had gone in for a policy of large expenditure for the purpose of securing the country against the possibilities of French invasion. He had spoken of the commercial treaty with France as if it were a thing rather ridiculous than otherwise. He was unsparing whenever he had a chance in his ridicule of the ballot. He had very little sympathy with the grievances of the Nonconformists, some of them even then real and substantial enough. He took no manner of interest in anything proposed for the political benefit of Ireland. He was indeed impatient of all 'views;' and he regarded what is called philosophic statesmanship with absolute contempt. The truth is that Palmerston ceased to be a statesman the moment he came to deal with domestic interests. When actually in the Home Office, and compelled to turn his attention to the business of that department, he proved a very efficient administrator, because of his shrewdness and his energy. But as a rule he had not much to do with English political affairs, and he knew little or nothing of them. He was even childishly ignorant of many things which any ordinary public man is supposed to know. He was at home in foreign—that is, in Continental politics; for he had hardly any knowledge of American affairs, and almost up to the moment of the fall of Richmond was confident that the Union never could be restored, and that separation was the easy and natural way of settling all the dispute. When he read anything except despatches he read scientific treatises, for he had a keen interest in some branches of science; but he cared little for modern English literature. The world in which he delighted to mingle talked of Continental politics generally, and a great knowledge of English domestic affairs would have been thrown away there. Naturally, therefore, when Lord Palmerston had nothing particular to do in foreign affairs, and had to turn his attention to England, he relished the idea of fortifying her against foreign foes. Lord Palmerston acted sincerely on his opinion, that 'man is a fighting and quarrelling animal,' and he could see no better business for English statesmanship than to keep this country always in a condition to resist a possible attack from somebody. He differed almost radically on this point from two at least of his more important colleagues, Mr. Gladstone and Sir George Cornewall Lewis.

Lord Palmerston's taste for foreign affairs had now ample means of gratification. England had some small troubles of her own to deal with. A serious insurrection sprang up in

New Zealand. The tribe of the Waikatos, living near Auckland, in the Northern Island, began a movement against the colonists, and this became before long a general rebellion of the Maori natives. The Maoris are a remarkably intelligent race, and are skilful in war as well as in peace. They had a certain literary art among them; they could all, or nearly all, read and write; many of them were eloquent and could display considerable diplomatic skill. They fought so well in this instance that the British troops actually suffered a somewhat serious repulse in endeavouring to take one of the Maori palisado-fortified villages. In the end, however, the Maoris were of course defeated. The quarrel was a survival of a long-standing dispute between the colonists and the natives about land. It was, in fact, the old story: the colonists eager to increase their stock of land, and the natives jealous to guard their quickly vanishing possession. The events led to grave discussion in Parliament. The Legislature of New Zealand passed enactments, confiscating some nine million acres of the native lands, and giving the Colonial Government something like absolute and arbitrary power of arrest and imprisonment. The Government at home proposed to help the colonists by a guarantee to raise a loan of one million to cover the expenses of the war, or the colonial share of them, and this proposal was keenly discussed in the House of Commons. The Government passed their Guarantee Bill, not without many a protest from both sides of the House that colonists who readily engaged in quarrels with natives must some time or other be prepared to bear the expenses entailed by their own policy.

Trouble, too, arose on the Gold Coast of Africa. Some slaves of the King of Ashantee had taken refuge in British territory; the Governor of Cape Coast Colony would not give them up; and in the spring of 1863 the King made threatening demonstrations, and approached within forty miles of our frontier. The Governor, assuming that the settlement was about to be invaded by the Ashantees, took it upon him to anticipate the movement by sending an expedition into the territory of the King. The season was badly chosen; the climate was pestilential; even the black troops from the West Indies could not endure it, and began to die like flies. The ill-advised undertaking had to be given up; and the Government at home only escaped a vote of censure by a narrow majority of seven. Much discussion, also, was aroused by occurrences in Japan. A British subject, Mr. Richardson, was murdered

in the English settlement of Japan and on an open road made free to Englishmen by treaty. This was in September 1862. The murder was committed by some of the followers of Prince Satsuma, one of the powerful feudal princes, who then practically divided the authority of Japan with the regular Government. Reparation was demanded both from the Japanese Government and from Prince Satsuma ; the Government paid the sum demanded of them, 100,000*l.*, and made an apology. Prince Satsuma was called on to pay 25,000*l.*, and to see that the murderers were brought to punishment. Satsuma did nothing, and in 1863 Colonel Neale, the English *Chargé d'Affaires* in Japan, sent Admiral Kuper with the English fleet to Kagosima, Satsuma's capital, to demand satisfaction. The Kagosima forts opened fire on him, and he then bombarded the town and laid the greater portion of it in ashes. Fortunately the non-combatant inhabitants, the women and children, had had time to get out of Kagosima, and the destruction of life was not great. The whole transaction was severely condemned by many Englishmen, but the House of Commons, however, sustained the Government by a large majority. The Government, it should be said, did not profess to justify the destruction of Kagosima. Their case was that Admiral Kuper had to do something ; that there was nothing he could very well do when he had been fired upon but to bombard the town ; and that the burning of the town was an accident of the conflict for which neither he nor they could be held responsible. Satsuma finally submitted and paid the money, and promised justice. But there were more murders and more bombardings yet before we came to anything like an abiding settlement with Japan ; and Japan itself was not far off a revolution, the most sudden, organic, and to all appearance complete that has ever yet been seen in the history of nations.

In the meantime, however, our Government became involved in liabilities more perilous than any disputes in eastern or southern islands could bring on them. An insurrection of a very serious kind broke out in Poland. It was provoked by the attempt of the Russian Government to choke off the patriotic movement which was going on in Poland by pressing into the military ranks all the young men in the cities who could by any possibility be supposed to have any sympathy with it. The young men who could escape fled to the woods, and there formed themselves into armed bands, which gave the Russians great trouble. The rebels could disperse and come together with

such ease and rapidity that it was very difficult indeed to get any real advantage over them. The frontier of Austrian-Poland was very near, and the insurgents could cross it, escape from the Russian troops, and recross it when they pleased to resume their harassing operations. Austria was not by any means so unfriendly to the Polish patriots as both Russia and Prussia were. Austria had come unwillingly into the scheme for the partition of Poland, and had got little profit by it; and it was well understood that if the other Powers concerned could see their way to the restoration of Polish nationality, Austria, for her part, would make no objection. Prussia was still very much under the dominion of Russia, and was prevailed upon or coerced to execute an odious convention with Russia, by virtue of which the Russian troops were allowed to follow Polish insurgents into Prussian territory.

It was plain from the first that the Poles could not under the most favourable circumstances hold out long against Russia by virtue of their own strength. The idea of the Poles was to keep the insurrection up, by any means and at any risk, until some of the great European Powers should be induced to interfere. Despite the lesson of subsequent events, the Poles were well justified in their political calculations. Their hopes were at one time on the very eve of being realised. The Emperor Napoleon was eager to move to their aid, and Lord Russell was hardly less eager. The Polish cause was very popular in England. Russia was hated; Prussia was now hated even more. There was no question of party feeling about the sympathy with Poland. There were about as many Conservatives as Radicals who were ready to favour the idea of some effort being made in her behalf. Lord Ellenborough spoke up for Poland in the House of Lords with poetic and impassioned eloquence. Lord Shaftesbury from the opposite benches denounced the conduct of Russia. The Irish Catholic was as ardent for Polish liberty as the London artisan. Among its most conspicuous and energetic advocates in England were Mr. Pope Hennessy, a Catholic and Irish member of Parliament; and Mr. Edmond Beales, the leader of a great Radical organisation in London. Great public meetings were held, at which Russia was denounced and Poland advocated, not merely by popular orators, but by men of high rank and grave responsibility. War was not openly called for at those meetings, or in the House of Commons; but it was urged that England, as one of the Powers which had signed the Treaty of Vienna, should join with other States in summoning

Russia to recognise the rights, such as they were, which had been secured to Poland by virtue of that treaty. In France the greatest enthusiasm prevailed for the cause of Poland. The Emperor Napoleon was ready for intervention if he could get England to join him. Lord Russell went so far as to draw up and despatch to Russia, in concert with France and Austria, a note on the subject of Poland. It urged on the attention of the Russian Government six points, as the outline of a system of pacification for Poland. These were :—a complete amnesty; a national representation ; a distinct national administration of Poles for the kingdom of Poland ; full liberty of conscience, with the repeal of all the restrictions imposed on Catholic worship ; the recognition of the Polish language as official ; the establishment of a regular system of recruiting. There was an almost universal impression at one moment that in the event of Russia declining to accept these recommendations, England, Austria, and France would make war to compel her.

It soon became known, however, that there was to be no intervention. Lord Palmerston put a stop to the whole idea. It was not that he sympathised with Russia. But Lord Palmerston had by this time grown into a profound distrust of the Emperor Napoleon. He was convinced that the Emperor was stirring in the matter chiefly with the hope of getting an opportunity of establishing himself in the Rhine provinces of Prussia, on the pretext of compelling Prussia to remain neutral in the struggle, or of punishing her if she took the side of Russia. Lord Palmerston would have nothing to do with a proposal of the Emperor for an identical note to be addressed to Prussia on the subject of the convention with Russia. After a while it became known that England had decided not to join in any project for armed intervention ; and from that moment Russia became merely contemptuous. The Emperor of the French would not and could not take action single-handed ; and Prince Gortschakoff politely told Lord Russell that England had really better mind her own business and not encourage movements in Poland which were simply the work of 'cosmopolitan revolution.' After this Austria did not allow her frontier line to be made any longer a basis of operations against Russia. The insurrection was flung wholly on its own resources. It was kept up gallantly and desperately for a time, but the end was certain. The Russians carried out their measures of pacification with an unflinching hand. Floggings, and shootings, and hangings

of women as well as of men were in full vigour. Droves of prisoners were sent to Siberia. Poland was crushed. The intervention of England had only harmed Poland. It had been carried just far enough to irritate the oppressor and not far enough to be of the slightest benefit to the oppressed.

The effect of the policy pursued by England in this case was to bring about a certain coldness between the Emperor Napoleon and the English Government. This fact was made apparent some little time after when the dispute between Denmark and the Germanic Confederation came up in relation to the Schleswig-Holstein succession. Schleswig, Holstein, and Lauenburg were Duchies attached to Denmark. Holstein and Lauenburg were purely German in nationality, and a large proportion of the population of Schleswig, much the larger proportion in the southern districts, were German. There can be no doubt that the heart of the German people was deeply interested in the condition of the Schleswigers and Holsteiners. It was only natural that a great people should have been unwilling to see so many of their countrymen, on the very edge of Germany itself, kept under the rule of the Danish King. In truth the claims of Germany and Denmark were irreconcilable. Put into plain words the dispute was between Denmark, which wanted to make the Duchies Danish, and Germany, which wanted to have them German.

The affairs of Prussia were now in the hands of a strong man, one of the strongest men modern times have known. Daring, unscrupulous, and crafty as Cavour, Bismarck was even already able to wield a power which had never been within Cavour's reach. The public intelligence of Europe had not yet recognised the marvellous combination of qualities which was destined to make their owner famous, and to prove a dissolving force in the settled systems of Germany, and indeed of the whole European continent. As yet the general opinion of the world set down Herr von Bismarck as simply a fanatical reactionary, a combination of bully and buffoon. The Schleswig-Holstein Question became, however, a very serious one for Denmark when it was taken up by Bismarck. From first to last the mind of Bismarck was evidently made up that the Duchies should be annexed to Prussia. War became certain. Austria and Prussia entered into joint agreements for the purpose, and Denmark, one of the smallest and weakest kingdoms in the world, found herself engaged in conflict with Austria and Prussia combined.

The little Danish David had defied two Goliaths to combat at one moment.

Were the Danes and their Sovereign and their Government mad? Not at all. They well knew that they could not hold out alone against the two German Great Powers. But they counted on the help of Europe, and especially of England. Lord Russell in multitudinous despatches had very often given the Danish Government sound and sensible advice. He had declared, that if Denmark did not follow England's advice England would not come to her assistance in case she were attacked by the Germans. Denmark interpreted this as an assurance that if she followed England's counsels she might count on England's protection, and she insisted that she had strictly followed England's counsels for this very reason. When the struggle seemed approaching, Lord Palmerston said in the House of Commons at the close of a session, that if any violent attempt were made to overthrow the rights and interfere with the independence of Denmark, those who made the attempt would find in the result that it would not be Denmark alone with which they would have to contend. These words were afterwards explained as intended to be merely prophetic, and to indicate Lord Palmerston's private belief that in the event of Denmark being invaded, France, or Russia, or some State somewhere, would probably be generous enough to come to the assistance of the Danes. But when the words were spoken, it did not occur to the mind of anyone to interpret them in such a sense. Everyone believed that Lord Palmerston was answering on behalf of the English Government and the English people.

The Danes counted with confidence on the help of England. They refused to accept the terms which Germany would have imposed. They prepared for war. Public opinion in England was all but unanimous in favour of Denmark. Five out of every six persons were for England's drawing the sword in her cause at once. Five out of every six of the small minority who were against war were nevertheless in sympathy with the Danes. Many reasons combined to bring about this condition of national feeling. Austria was not popular in England; Prussia was detested. The Prince of Wales had been married to the Princess Alexandra, the daughter of the King of Denmark, on March 10, 1863. She was not a Dane, but her family had now come to rule in Denmark, and she became in that sense a Danish princess.

Her youth, her beauty, her goodness, her sweet and winning ways, had made her more popular than any foreign princess ever before was known to be in England. It seemed even to some who ought to have had more judgment that the virtues and charms of the Princess Alexandra, and the fact that she was now Princess of Wales, supplied ample proof of the justice of the Danish cause, and of the duty of England to support it in arms. Not small, therefore, was the disappointment spread over the country when it was found that the Danes were left alone to their defence, and that England was not to put out a hand to help them. Lord Russell was willing at one moment to intervene by arms in support of Denmark if France would join with England, and he made a proposal of this kind to the French Government. The Emperor Napoleon refused to interfere. He had been hurt by England's refusal to join with him in sustaining Poland against Russia, and now was his time to make a return. There was absolutely nothing for it but to leave the Danes to fight out their battle in the best way they could.

The Danes fought with a great deal of spirit; but they were extravagantly outnumbered, and their weapons were miserably unfit to contend against their powerful enemies. The Prussian needle-gun came into play with terrible effect in the campaign, and it soon made all attempts at resistance on the part of the Danes utterly hopeless. The Danes lost their ground and their fortresses. They won one little fight on the sea, defeating some Austrian vessels in the German Ocean off Heligoland. The news was received with wild enthusiasm in England. Its announcement in the House of Commons drew down the unwonted manifestation of a round of applause from the Strangers' Gallery. But the struggle had ceased to be anything like a serious campaign. The English Government kept up active negotiations on behalf of peace, and at length succeeded in inducing the belligerents to agree to a suspension of arms, in order that a Conference of the Great Powers might be held in London. The deliberations of the Conference came to nothing. Curiously enough the final rejection of all compromise came from the Danes. The war broke out again. The renewed hostilities lasted, however, but a short time. The Danish Government sent Prince John of Denmark direct to Berlin to negotiate for peace, and terms of peace were easily arranged. Nothing could be more simple. Denmark gave up everything she had

been fighting for, and agreed to bear part of the expense which had been entailed upon the German Powers by the task of chastising her. The Duchies were surrendered to the disposal of the Allies. A new war was to settle the ownership of the Duchies, and some much graver questions of German interest at the same time.

It was obviously impossible that the conduct of the English Government should pass unchallenged. Accordingly, in the two Houses of Parliament notices were given of a vote of censure on the Government. Lord Malmesbury, in Lord Derby's absence, proposed the resolution in the House of Lords, and it was carried by a majority of nine. The Government made little account of that; the Lords always had a Tory majority. In the House of Commons, however, the matter was much more serious. On July 4, 1864, Mr. Disraeli himself moved the resolution condemning the conduct of the Government. The resolution invited the House to express its regret that 'while the course pursued by her Majesty's Government has failed to maintain their avowed policy of upholding the integrity and independence of Denmark, it has lowered the just influence of this country in the capitals of Europe, and thereby diminished the securities for peace.' Mr. Disraeli's speech was ingenious and telling. The Government did not make any serious attempts to justify all they had done. They were glad to seize upon the opportunity offered by an amendment which Mr. Kinglake proposed, and which merely declared the satisfaction with which the House had learned 'that at this conjuncture her Majesty had been advised to abstain from armed intervention in the war now going on between Denmark and the German Powers.' This amendment, it will be seen at once, did not meet the accusations raised by Mr. Disraeli. It simply asserted that the House was, at all events, glad to hear there was to be no interference in the war. Lord Palmerston, however, had an essentially practical way of looking at every question. He was of opinion, with O'Connell, that, after all, the verdict is the thing. He knew he could not get the verdict on the particular issues raised by Mr. Disraeli, but he was in good hope that he could get it on the policy of his administration generally.

His speech closing the debate was a masterpiece not of eloquence, not of political argument, but of practical Parliamentary tactics. He spoke, as was his fashion, without the aid of a single note. It was a wonderful spectacle that of the

man of eighty, thus in the growing morning pouring out his unbroken stream of easy effective eloquence. He dropped the particular questions connected with the vote of censure almost immediately, and went into a long review of the whole policy of his administration. He spoke as if the resolution before the House were a proposal to impeach the Government for the entire course of their domestic policy. He passed in triumphant review all the splendid feats which Mr. Gladstone had accomplished in the reduction of taxation; he took credit for the commercial treaty with France, and for other achievements in which at the time of their accomplishment he had hardly even affected to feel an interest. He spoke directly at the economical Liberals; the men who were for sound finance and freedom of international commerce. The regular Opposition, as he well knew, would vote against him; the regular supporters of the Ministry would vote for him. Nothing could alter the course to be taken by either of these parties. The advanced Liberals, the men whom possibly Palmerston in his heart rather despised as calculators and economists,—these might be affected one way or the other by the manner in which he addressed himself to the debate. To these and at these he spoke. He knew that Mr. Gladstone was the one leading man in the Ministry whom they regarded with full trust and admiration, and on Mr. Gladstone's exploits he virtually rested his case. His speech said in plain words: 'If you vote for this resolution proposed by Mr. Disraeli you turn Mr. Gladstone out of office; you give the Tories, who understand nothing about Free Trade, and who opposed the French Commercial Treaty, an opportunity of marring all that he has made.' Some of Lord Palmerston's audience were a little impatient now and then. 'What has all this to do with the question before the House?' was murmured from more than one bench. It had everything to do with the question that was really before the House. That question was, 'Shall Palmerston remain in office, or shall he go out and the Tories come in?' When the division was taken Lord Palmerston was saved by a majority of eighteen. It was not a very brilliant victory. There were not many votes to spare. But it was a victory. The Conservative miss by a foot was as good for Lord Palmerston as a miss by a mile. It gave him a secure tenure of office for the rest of his life. Such as it was, the victory was won mainly by his own skill, energy, and astuteness, by the ready manner in which he evaded the

question actually in debate, and rested his claim to acquittal on services which no one proposed to disparage.

That was the last great speech made by Lord Palmerston. That was the last great occasion on which he was called upon to address the House of Commons. The effort was worthy of the emergency, and, at least in an artistic sense, deserved success. The speech exactly served its purpose. It had no brilliant passages. It had no hint of an elevated thought. It did not trouble itself with any profession of exalted purpose or principle. It did not contain a single sentence that anyone would care to remember after the emergency had passed away. But it did for Lord Palmerston what great eloquence might have failed to do; what a great orator by virtue of his very genius and oratorical instincts might only have marred. It took captive the wavering minds, and it carried the division.

One cannot study English politics, even in the most superficial way, without being struck by the singular regularity with which they are governed by the law of action and reaction. The succession of ebb and flow in the tides is not more regular and more certain. A season of political energy is sure to come after a season of political apathy. The movement of reaction against Reform in domestic policy was in full force during the earlier years of Lord Palmerston's Government. In home politics, and where finance and commercial legislation were not concerned, Palmerston was a Conservative Minister. He was probably on the whole more highly esteemed among the rank and file of the Opposition in the House of Commons than by the rank and file on his own side. Not a few of the Conservative country gentlemen would in their hearts have been glad if he could have remained Prime Minister for ever. Many of those who voted, with their characteristic fidelity to party, for Mr. Disraeli's resolution of censure, were glad in their hearts that Lord Palmerston came safely out of the difficulty. But as the years went on there were manifest signs of the coming and inevitable reaction. One of the most striking of these indications was found in the position taken by Mr. Gladstone. For some time Mr. Gladstone had been more and more distinctly identifying himself with the opinions of the advanced Liberals. The advanced Liberals themselves were of two sections or fractions, working together almost always, but very distinct in complexion; and it was Mr. Gladstone's fortune to be drawn by his sympathies to both

alike. He was of course drawn towards the Manchester School by his economic views; by his agreement with them on all subjects relating to finance and to freedom of commerce. But the Manchester Liberals were for non-intervention in foreign politics; and they carried this into their sympathies as well as into their principles. The other section of the advanced Liberals were sometimes even flightily eager in their sympathies with the Liberal movements of the Continent. Mr. Gladstone was in communion with the movements of foreign Liberals, as he was with those of English Free-traders and economists. He was therefore qualified to stand between both sections of the advanced Liberals of England, and give one hand to each. During the debates on Italian questions of 1860 and 1861 he had identified himself with the cause of Italian unity and independence.

In the year 1864 Garibaldi came on a visit to England, and was received in London with an outburst of enthusiasm, the like whereof had not been seen since Kossuth first passed down Cheapside, and perhaps was not seen even then. At first the leading men of nearly all parties held aloof except Mr. Gladstone. He was among the very first and most cordial in his welcome to Garibaldi. Then the Liberal leaders in general thought they had better consult for their popularity by taking Garibaldi up. Then the Conservative leaders too began to think it would never do for them to hold back when the prospect of a general election was so closely overshadowing them, and they plunged into the Garibaldi welcome. The peerage then rushed at Garibaldi. The crowd in the streets were perfectly sincere, some acclaiming Garibaldi because they had a vague knowledge that he had done brave deeds somewhere, and represented a cause; others, perhaps the majority, because they assumed that he was somehow opposed to the Pope. The leaders of society were for the most part not sincere. The whole thing ended in a quarrel between the aristocracy and the democracy; and Garibaldi was got back to his island somehow. Mr. Gladstone was one of the few among the leaders who were undoubtedly sincere, and the course he took made him a great favourite with the advanced Radicals.

Mr. Gladstone had given other indications of a distinct tendency to pass over altogether from Conservatism, and even from Peelism, into the ranks of the Radical Reformers. On May 11, 1864, a private member brought on a motion in the

House of Commons for the reduction of the borough franchise from 10*l.* rental to 6*l.* During the debate that followed Mr. Gladstone made a remarkable declaration. He contended that the burden of proof rested upon those 'who would exclude forty-nine fiftieths of the working classes from the franchise;' 'it is for them to show the unworthiness, the incapacity, and the misconduct of the working class.' 'I say,' he repeated, 'that every man who is not presumably incapacitated by some consideration of personal unfitness or political danger, is morally entitled to come within the pale of the constitution.' The bill was rejected, but the speech of Mr. Gladstone gave an importance to the debate and to the occasion which it would not be easy to overrate. The position taken up by all Conservative minds, no matter to which side of politics their owners belonged, had been that the claim must be made out for those seeking an extension of the suffrage in their favour; that they must show imperative public need, immense and clear national and political advantage, to justify the concession; that the mere fact of their desire and fitness for the franchise ought not to count for anything in the consideration. Mr. Gladstone's way of looking at the question created enthusiasm on the one side—consternation and anger on the other. Early in the following session there was a motion introduced by Mr. Dillwyn, a staunch and persevering Reformer, declaring that the position of the Irish State Church was unsatisfactory, and called for the early attention of her Majesty's Government. Mr. Gladstone spoke on the motion, and drew a contrast between the State Church of England and that of Ireland, pointing out that the Irish Church ministered only to the religious wants of one-eighth or one-ninth of the community amid which it was established. The eyes of all Radical Reformers, therefore, began to turn to Mr. Gladstone as the future Minister of Reform in Church and State. He became from the same moment an object of distrust, and something approaching to detestation, in the eyes of all steady-going Conservatives.

Meanwhile there were many changes taking place in the social and political life of England. Many eminent men passed away during the years that Lord Palmerston held his almost absolute sway over the House of Commons. One man we may mention in the first instance, although he was no politician, and his death in no wise affected the prospects of parties. The attention of the English people was called

from questions of foreign policy and of possible intervention in the Danish quarrel, by an event which happened on the Christmas eve of 1863. That day it became known throughout London that the author of 'Vanity Fair' was dead. Mr. Thackeray died suddenly at the house in Kensington which he had lately had built for him in the fashion of that Queen Anne period which he loved and had illustrated so admirably. He was still in the very prime of life; no one had expected that his career was so soon to close. It had not been in any sense a long career. Success had come somewhat late to him, and he was left but a short time to enjoy it. He had established himself in the very foremost rank of English novelists; with Fielding and Goldsmith and Miss Austen and Dickens. He had been a literary man and hardly anything else; having had little to do with politics or political journalism. Once indeed he was seized with a sudden ambition to take a seat in the House of Commons, and at the general election of 1857 he offered himself as a candidate for the city of Oxford in opposition to Mr. Cardwell. He was not elected; and he seemed to accept failure cheerfully as a hint that he had better keep to literary work for the future. He would go back to his author's desk, he said good-humouredly; and he kept his word. It is not likely he would have been a parliamentary success. He had no gift of speech and had but little interest in the details of party politics. His political views were sentiments rather than opinions. It is not true that success in Parliament is incompatible with literary distinction. Macaulay and Grote, and two of Thackeray's own craft, Lord Beaconsfield and Lord Lytton, may be called as recent witnesses to disprove that common impression. But these were men who had a distinctly political object, or who loved political life, and were only following their star when they sought seats in the House of Commons. Thackeray had no such vocation, and would have been as much out of place in parliamentary debate as a painter or a musician. He had no need to covet parliamentary reputation. As it was well said when the news of his defeat at Oxford reached London, the Houses of Lords and Commons together could not have produced 'Barry Lyndon' and 'Pendennis.' His early death was a source not only of national but of world-wide regret. It eclipsed the Christmas gaiety of nations. If Thackeray died too soon, it was only too soon for his family and his friends. His fame was secure. He could hardly with any length of years have added a cubit to his literary stature.

A whole group of statesmen had passed prematurely away. Sir James Graham had died after several years of a quiet career; still a celebrity in the House of Commons, but not much in the memory of the public outside it. One of his latest speeches in Parliament was on the Chinese war of 1860. On the last day of the session of 1861, and when almost all the other members had left the House, he remained for a while talking with a friend and former colleague, and as they were separating, Sir James Graham expressed a cheery hope that they should meet on the first day of the next session in the same place. But Graham died in the following October. Sidney Herbert had died a few months before in the same year. Sidney Herbert had been raised to the peerage as Lord Herbert of Lea. He had entered the House of Lords because his breaking health rendered it impossible for him to stand the wear and tear of life in the Commons, and he loved politics and public affairs, and could not be induced to renounce them and live in quiet. He was a man of great gifts, and was looked upon as a prospective Prime Minister. He had a graceful and gracious bearing; he was an able administrator, and a very skilful and persuasive debater. He never declaimed; never even tried to be what is commonly called eloquent; but his sentences came out with a singularly expressive combination of force and ease, every argument telling, every stroke having the lightness of an Eastern champion's sword-play. He had high social station, and was in every way fitted to stand at the head of English public affairs. He was but fifty-one years of age when he died. The country for some time looked on Sir George Lewis as a man likely to lead an administration; but he too passed away before his natural time. He died two years after Sir James Graham and Sidney Herbert, and was only some fifty-seven years old at his death. Lord Elgin was dead and Lord Canning; and Lord Dalhousie had been some years dead. The Duke of Newcastle died in 1864. Nor must we omit to mention the death of Cardinal Wiseman on February 15, 1865. Cardinal Wiseman had outlived the popular clamour once raised against him in England. There was a time when his name would have set all the pulpit-drums of no-Popery rattling; he came at length to be respected and admired everywhere in England as a scholar and a man of ability. He was a devoted ecclesiastic, whose zeal for his church was his honour, and whose earnest labour in the work he was set to do had shortened his busy life.

During the time from the first outbreak of the Civil War in the United States to its close all these men were removed from the scene, and the Civil War was hardly over when Richard Cobden was quietly laid in an English country churchyard. Mr. Cobden paid a visit to his constituents of Rochdale in November 1864, and spoke to a great public meeting on public affairs, and he did not appear to have lacked any of his usual ease and energy. This was Cobden's last speech. He did not come up to London until the March of 1865, and the day on which he travelled was so bitterly cold that the bronchial affection from which he was suffering became cruelly aggravated. He sank rapidly, and on April 2 he died. The scene in the House of Commons next evening was very touching. Lord Palmerston and Mr. Disraeli both spoke of Cobden with genuine feeling and sympathy; but Mr. Bright's few and broken words were as noble an epitaph as friendship could wish for the grave of a great and a good man.

The Liberal party found themselves approaching a general election, with their ranks thinned by many severe losses. The Government had lost one powerful member by an event other than death. The Lord Chancellor, Lord Westbury, had resigned his office in consequence of a vote of the House of Commons. Lord Westbury had made many enemies. He was a man of great capacity and energy, into whose nature the scorn of forms and of lesser intelligences entered far too freely. His character was somewhat wanting in the dignity of moral elevation. He had a tongue of marvellous bitterness. His sarcastic power was probably unequalled in the House of Commons while he sat there; and when he came into the House of Lords he fairly took away the breath of stately and formal peers by the unsparing manner in which he employed his most dangerous gift. His style of cruel irony was made all the more effective by the peculiar suavity of the tone in which he gave out his sarcasms and his epithets. With a face that only suggested soft bland benevolence, with eyes half closed as those of a mediæval saint, and in accents of subdued melliluous benignity, the Lord Chancellor was wont to pour out a stream of irony that corroded like some deadly acid. Such a man was sure to make enemies; and the time came when, in the Scriptural sense, they found him out. He had been lax in his manner of using his patronage. In one case he had allowed an official of the House of Lords to retire, and to

receive a retiring pension, while a grave charge connected with his conduct in another public office was to Lord Westbury's knowledge impending over him; and Lord Westbury had appointed his own son to the place thus vacated. Thus at first sight it naturally appeared that Lord Westbury had sanctioned the pensioning off of a public servant, against whom a serious charge was still awaiting decision, in order that a place might be found for the Lord Chancellor's own son.

The question was taken up by the House of Commons; and somewhat unfortunately taken up in the first instance by a strong political opponent of the Government. On July 3, 1865, Mr. Ward Hunt moved a distinct vote of censure on the Lord Chancellor. The House did not agree to the resolution, which would have branded the Lord Chancellor's conduct as 'highly reprehensible, and calculated to throw discredit on the administration of the high offices of the State.' It, however, accepted an amendment which, while acquitting Lord Westbury of any corrupt motive, declared that the granting of the pension showed a laxity of practice and want of caution with regard to the public interests on the part of the Lord Chancellor. The Government were not able to resist this resolution. Lord Palmerston made the best effort he could to save the Lord Chancellor; but the common feeling of the House held that the words of the amendment were not too strong; and the Government had to bow to it. The Lord Chancellor immediately resigned his office. No other course was fairly open to him. The Government lost a man of singular ability and energy. Many thought, when all was done, that he had been somewhat harshly used. He would, perhaps, have been greatly surprised himself to know how many kindly things were said of him.

The hour of political reaction was evidently near at hand. Five years had passed away since the withdrawal of Lord John Russell's Reform Bill; and five years may represent in ordinary calculation the ebb or flow of the political tide. The dissolution of Parliament was near. Lord Derby described the Speech from the Throne at the opening of the session of 1865 as a sort of address very proper to be delivered by an aged minister to a moribund Parliament. The Parliament had run its course. It had accomplished the rare feat of living out its days, and having to die by simple efflux of time. On July 6, 1865, Parliament was dissolved.

The first blow was struck in the City of London, and the

Liberals carried all the seats. Four Liberals were elected. In Westminster the contest was somewhat remarkable. The constituency of Westminster always had the generous ambition to wish to be represented by at least one man of distinction. Mr. Mill was induced to come out of his calm retirement in Avignon and accept the candidature for Westminster. He issued an address embodying his well-known political opinions. He declined to look after local business, and on principle he objected to pay any part of the expenses of election. It was felt to be a somewhat bold experiment to put forward such a man as Mill among the candidates for the representation of a popular constituency. His opinions were extreme. He was not known to belong to any church or religious denomination. He was a philosopher, and English political organisations do not love philosophers. He was almost absolutely unknown to his countrymen in general. Until he came forward as a leader of the agitation in favour of the Northern Cause during the Civil War, he had never, so far as we know, been seen on an English political platform. Even of the electors of Westminster, very few had ever seen him before his candidature. Many were under the vague impression that he was a clever man who wrote wise books and died long ago. He was not supposed to have any liking or capacity for parliamentary life. More than ten years before it was known to a few that he had been invited to stand for an Irish county and had declined. That was at the time when his observations on the Irish land tenure system and the condition of Ireland generally had filled the hearts of many Irishmen with delight and wonder—delight and wonder to find that a cold English philosopher and economist should form such just and generous opinions about Irish questions, and should express them with such a noble courage. Since that time he had not been supposed to have any inclination for public life; nor we believe had any serious effort been made to tempt him out of his retirement. The idea now occurred to Mr. James Beal, a popular Westminster politician, and he pressed it so earnestly on Mill as a public duty that Mill did not feel at liberty to refuse. Mill was one of the few men who have only to be convinced that a thing is incumbent on them as a public duty to set about doing it forthwith, no matter how distasteful it might be to them personally, or what excellent excuses they might offer for leaving the duty to others. He had written things which might well make him doubtful about the prudence of courting the suffrages of an English

popular constituency. He was understood to be a rationalist; he was a supporter of many political opinions that seemed to ordinary persons much like crotchets, or even crazes. He had once said in his writings, that the working classes in England were given to lying. He had now to stand up on platforms before crowded and noisy assemblies where everything he had ever written or said could be made the subject of question and of accusation, and with enemies outside capable of torturing every explanation to his disadvantage. A man of independent opinions, and who has not been ashamed to change his opinions when he thought them wrong, or afraid to put on record each opinion in the time when he held to it, is at much disadvantage on the hustings. He will find out there what it is to have written books and to have enemies. Mill triumphed over all the difficulties by downright courage and honesty. When asked at a public meeting chiefly composed of working men, whether he had ever said the working classes were given to lying, he answered straight out, 'I did;' a bold blunt admission without any qualification. The boldness and frankness of the reply struck home to the manhood of the working men who listened to him. Here they saw a leader who would never shrink from telling them the truth. They greeted his answer with vehement applause, and Mr. Mill was returned to Parliament by a majority of some hundreds over the Conservative competitor.

In many other instances there was a marked indication that the political tide had turned in favour of Liberal opinions. Mr. Thomas Hughes, author of 'Tom Brown's Schooldays,' was returned for Lambeth. Mr. Duncan M'Laren, brother-in-law of Mr. Bright, and an advanced Radical, was elected for Edinburgh, unseating a mild Whig. Mr. G. O. Trevelyan, a brilliant young Radical, nephew of Macaulay, came into Parliament. In Ireland some men of strong opinions, of ability and of high character found seats in the House of Commons for the first time. One of these was Mr. J. B. Dillon, a man who had been concerned in the Irish Rebellion of 1848. Mr. Dillon had lived for some years in the United States, and had lately returned to Ireland under an amnesty. He at once reassumed a leading part in Irish politics and won a high reputation for his capacity and his integrity. He promised to have an influential part in bringing together the Irish members and the English Radicals, but his untimely death cut short what would unquestionably have been a very

useful career. Wherever there was a change in the character of the new Parliament it seemed to be in favour of advanced Reform. It was not merely that the Tories were left in a minority, but that so many mild Whigs had been removed to give place to genuine Liberals. Mr. Disraeli himself spoke of the new Parliament as one which had distinctly increased the strength and the following of Mr. Bright. No one could fail to see, he pointed out, that Mr. Bright occupied a very different position now from that which he had held in the late Parliament. New men had come into the House of Commons, men of integrity and ability, who were above all things advanced Reformers. The position of Mr. Gladstone was markedly changed. He had been defeated at the University of Oxford by Mr. Gathorne Hardy, but was at once put in nomination for South Lancashire, which was still open, and he was elected there. His severance from the University was regarded by the Liberals as his political emancipation. The Reformers then would have at their head the two great Parliamentary orators (one of them undoubtedly the future Prime Minister), and the philosophical writer and thinker of the day. This Liberal triumvirate, as they were called, would have behind them many new and earnest men, to whom their words would be a law. The alarmed Tories said to themselves that between England and the democratic flood there was left but one barrier, and that was in the person of the old statesman now in his eighty-first year, of whom more and more doubtful rumours began to arrive in London every day.

Down in Hertfordshire Lord Palmerston was dying. Long as his life was, if counted by mere years, it seems much longer still when we consider what it had compassed, and how active it had been from the earliest to the very end. Many men were older than Lord Palmerston; he left more than one senior behind him. But they were for the most part men whose work had long been done; men who had been consigned to the arm-chair of complete inactivity. Palmerston was a hard working statesman until within a very few days of his death. He had been a member of Parliament for nearly sixty years. He entered Parliament for the first time in the year when Byron, like himself a Harrow boy, published his first poems. He had been in the House of Commons for thirty years when the Queen came to the throne. During all his political career he was only out of office for rare and brief seasons.

It was only during the session of 1865 that Lord Palmerston began to give evidence that he was suffering severely at last from that affliction which has been called the most terrible of all diseases—old age. Up to the beginning of that year he had, despite his occasional fits of gout, scarcely shown any signs of actual decay. But during the session of 1865 Lord Palmerston suffered much for some of the later months. His eyesight had become very weak, and even with the help of strong glasses he found it difficult to read. He was getting feeble in every way. He ceased to have that joy of the strife which inspired him during Parliamentary debate even up to the attainment of his eightieth year. He had kept up his bodily vigour and the youthful elasticity of his spirits so long, that it must have come on him with the shock of a painful surprise when he first found that his frame and his nerves were beyond doubt giving way, and that he too must succumb to the cruel influence of years. The collapse of his vigour came on almost at a stroke. Lord Palmerston began to discontinue his attendances at the House; when he did attend, it was evident that he went through his Parliamentary duties with difficulty and even with pain. The Tiverton election on the dissolution of Parliament was his last public appearance. He went from Tiverton to Brocket, in Hertfordshire, a place which Lady Palmerston had inherited from Lord Melbourne, her brother; and there he remained. The gout had become very serious now. It had flown to a dangerous place; and Lord Palmerston had made the danger greater by venturing with his too youthful energy to ride out before he had nearly recovered from one severe attack. On October 17 a bulletin was issued, announcing that Lord Palmerston had been seriously ill, in consequence of having taken cold, but that he had been steadily improving for three days, and was then much better. Somehow this announcement failed to reassure people in London. Many had only then for the first time heard that Palmerston was ill, and the bare mention of the fact fell ominously on the ear of the public. The very next morning these suspicions were confirmed. It was announced that Lord Palmerston's condition had suddenly altered for the worse, and that he was gradually sinking. Then everyone knew that the end was near. There was no surprise when the news came next day that Palmerston was dead. He died on October 18. Had he only lived two days longer he would have completed his eighty-first year. He was buried

in Westminster Abbey with public honours on October 27. No man since the death of the Duke of Wellington had filled so conspicuous a place in the public mind. No man had enjoyed anything like the same amount of popularity. He died at the moment when that popularity had reached its very zenith. It had become the fashion of the day to praise all he said and all he did. It was the settled canon of the ordinary Englishman's faith that what Palmerston said England must feel. To stand forward as the opponent, or even the critic, of anything done or favoured by him was to be unpopular and unpatriotic. Lord Palmerston had certainly lived long enough in years, in enjoyment, in fame.

The regret for Palmerston was very general and very genuine. Privately, he can hardly have had any enemies. He had a kindly heart, which won on all people who came near him. He had no enduring enmities or capricious dislikes; and it was therefore very hard for ill-feeling to live in his beaming, friendly presence. He never disliked men merely because he had often to encounter them in political war. He tried his best to give them as good as they brought, and he bore no malice. There were some men whom he disliked, but they were men who for one reason or another stood persistently in his way, and who he fancied he had reason to believe had acted treacherously towards him. His manners were frank and genial rather than polished; and his is one of the rare instances in which a man contrived always to keep up his personal dignity without any stateliness of bearing and tone. He was a model combatant; when the combat was over, he was ready to sit down by his antagonist's side and be his friend, and talk over their experiences and exploits. He was absolutely free from affectation. This very fact gave sometimes an air almost of roughness to his manners, he could be so plain-spoken and downright when suddenly called on to express his mind. Personally truthful and honourable of course it would be superfluous to pronounce him. But Palmerston was too often willing to distinguish between the personal and the political integrity of a statesman. The gravest errors of this kind which Palmerston had committed were committed for an earlier generation. The general public of 1865 took small account of them. Not many would have cared much then about the grim story of Sir Alexander Burnes' despatches, or the manner in which Palmerston had played with the hopes of foreign Liberalism, conducting it more than

once rather to its grave than to its triumph. These things lived only in the minds of a few at the time when the news of his death came, and even of that few not many were anxious to dwell upon them.

Lord Palmerston is not to be judged by his domestic policy. Palmerston was himself only in the Foreign Office and in the House of Commons. In both alike the recognition of his true capacity came very late. His Parliamentary training had been perfected before its success was acknowledged. He was therefore able to use his faculties at any given moment to their fullest stretch. He could always count on them. They had been so well drilled by long practice that they would instantly come at call. He understood the moods of the House of Commons to perfection. He could play upon those moods as a performer does upon the keys of an instrument. He saw what men were in the mood to do, and he did it; and they were clear that that must be a great leader who led them just whither they felt inclined to go. Much earnestness he knew bored the House, and he took care never to be much in earnest. He left it to others to be eloquent. Lord Palmerston never cared to go deeper in his speeches than the surface in everything. He had no splendid phraseology; and probably would not have cared to make any display of splendid phraseology even if he had the gift. No speech of his would be read except for the present interest of the subject. No passages from Lord Palmerston are quoted by anybody. He always selected, and doubtless by a kind of instinct, not the arguments which were most logically cogent, but those which were most likely to suit the character and the temper of the audience he happened to be addressing. He spoke for his hearers, not for himself; to affect the votes of those to whom he was appealing, not for the sake of expressing any deep irrepressible convictions of his own. He never talked over the heads of his audience, or compelled them to strain their intellects in order to keep pace with his flights. No other statesman of our time could interpose so dexterously just before the division to break the effect of some telling speech against him, and to bring the House into a frame of mind for regarding all that had been done by the Opposition as a mere piece of political ceremonial, gone through in deference to the traditions or the formal necessities of party, on which it would be a waste of time to bestow serious thought.

The jests of Lord Palmerston always had a purpose in them,

and were better adapted to the occasion and the moment than the repartees of the best debater in the House. At one time, indeed, he flung his jests and personalities about in somewhat too reckless a fashion, and he made many enemies. But of late years, whether from growing discretion or kindly feeling, he seldom indulged in any pleasantries that could wound or offend. During his last Parliament he represented to the full the average head and heart of a House of Commons singularly devoid of high ambition or steady purpose; a House peculiarly intolerant of eccentricity, especially if it were that of genius; impatient of having its feelings long strained in any one direction, delighting only in ephemeral interests and excitements; hostile to anything which drew heavily on the energy or the intelligence. Such a House naturally acknowledged a heavy debt of gratitude to the statesman who never either puzzled or bored them. Men who distrusted Mr. Disraeli's antitheses, and were frightened by Mr. Gladstone's earnestness, found as much relief in the easy, pleasant, straightforward talk of Lord Palmerston, as a schoolboy finds in a game of marbles after a problem or a sermon.

CHAPTER XX.

THE NEW GOVERNMENT.

Lord Russell was invited by the Queen to form a Government after the death of Lord Palmerston. According to some rumours the opportunity would be taken to admit the Radical element to an influence in the actual councils of the nation such as it had never enjoyed before, and such as its undoubted strength in Parliament and the country now entitled it to have. The only changes, however, in the Cabinet were that Lord Russell became Prime Minister, and that Lord Clarendon, who had been Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, succeeded him as Foreign Secretary. One or two new men were brought into offices which did not give a seat in the Cabinet. Among these were Mr. Forster, who became Under-Secretary for the Colonies in the room of Mr. Chichester Fortescue, now Irish Secretary, and Mr. Goschen, who succeeded Mr. Hutt as Vice-President of the Board of Trade. Both Mr. Forster and Mr. Goschen soon afterwards

came to hold high official position, and to have seats in the Cabinet. In each instance the appointment was a concession to the growing Liberal feeling of the day; but the concession was slight and cautious. The country knew little about either Mr. Forster or Mr. Goschen at the time; and it will easily be imagined that those who thought a seat in the Cabinet for Mr. Bright was due to the people more even than to the man, and who had some hopes of seeing a similar place offered to Mr. Mill, were not satisfied by the arrangement which called two comparatively obscure men to unimportant office. The outer public did not quite appreciate the difficulties which a Liberal minister had to encounter in compromising between the Whigs and the Radicals. The Whigs included almost all the members of the party who were really influential by virtue of hereditary rank and noble station. It was impossible to overlook their claims. Some of the Whigs probably looked with alarm enough at the one serious change brought about by the death of Lord Palmerston: the change which made Mr. Gladstone leader of the House of Commons.

Meanwhile there were some important changes in the actual condition of things. The House of Commons, elected just before Lord Palmerston's death, was in many respects a far different House from that which it had been his last ministerial act to dissolve. Death had made many changes. There were changes, too, not brought about by death. The Lord John Russell of the Reform Bill had been made a Peer, and sat as Earl Russell in the House of Lords. Mr. Lowe, one of the ablest and keenest of political critics, who had for a while been shut down under the responsibilities of office, was a free lance once more. Mr. Lowe, who had before that held office two or three times, was Vice-President of the Committee of Council on Education from the beginning of Lord Palmerston's administration until April 1864. At that time a vote of censure was carried against his department, in other words against himself, on the motion of Lord Robert Cecil, for alleged 'mutilation' of the reports of the Inspectors of Schools, done, as it was urged, in order to bring the reports into seeming harmony with the educational views entertained by the Committee of Council. Lord Robert Cecil introduced the resolution in a speech singularly bitter and offensive. The motion was carried by a majority of 101 to 93. Mr. Lowe instantly resigned his office; but he did not allow the matter to rest there. He obtained the appointment of a

committee to inquire into the whole subject; and the result of the inquiry was not only that Mr. Lowe was entirely exonerated from the charge made against him, but that the resolution of the House of Commons was actually rescinded. It is probable, however, that Mr. Lowe felt that the Government of which he was a member had not given him all the support he might have expected. It is certain that if Lord Palmerston and his leading colleagues had thrown any great energy into their support of him, the vote of censure never could have been carried, and would not have had to be rescinded. This fact was brought back to the memory of many not long after, when Mr. Lowe, still an outsider, became the very Coriolanus of a sudden movement against the Reform policy of a Liberal Government. On the other hand, Mr. Layard, once a daring and somewhat reckless opponent of Government and governments, had been bound over to the peace, quietly enmeshed in the discipline of subordinate office. Yet the former fire was not wholly gone; it flamed up again on opportunity given. Perhaps Mr. Layard proved most formidable to his own colleagues, when he sometimes had to come into the ring to sustain their common cause. The old vigour of the professional gladiator occasionally drove him a little too heedlessly against the Opposition. So combative a temperament found it hard to submit always to the prosaic rigour of mere fact and the proprieties of official decorum.

The change in the leadership of the House of Commons was of course the most remarkable, and the most momentous, of the alterations that had taken place. From Lord Palmerston, admired almost to hero-worship by Whigs and Conservatives, the foremost position had suddenly passed to Mr. Gladstone, whose admirers were the most extreme of the Liberals, and who was distrusted and dreaded by all of Conservative instincts and sympathies, on the one side of the House as well as on the other. Mr. Gladstone and Mr. Disraeli were now brought directly face to face. One led the House, the other led the Opposition. With so many points of difference, and even of contrast, there was one slight resemblance in the political situation of Mr. Gladstone and Mr. Disraeli. Each was looked on with a certain doubt and dread by a considerable number of his own followers. It is evident that in such a state of things the strategical advantage lay with the leader of Opposition. He had not to take the initiative in anything, and the least loyal of his followers

would cordially serve under him in any effort to thwart a movement made by the Ministry. It came to be seen however before long that the Conservative leader was able to persuade his party to accept those very changes against which some of the followers of Mr. Gladstone were found ready to revolt. In order that some of the events to follow may not appear very mysterious, it is well to bear in mind that the formation of the new Ministry under Lord Russell had by no means given all the satisfaction to certain sections of the Liberal party which they believed themselves entitled to expect. Some were displeased because the new Government was not Radical enough. Some were alarmed because they fancied it was likely to go too far for the purpose of pleasing the Radicals. Some were vexed because men whom they looked up to as their natural leaders had not been invited to office. A few were annoyed because their own personal claims had been overlooked. One thing was certain: the Government must make a distinct move of some kind in the direction of Reform. So many new and energetic Liberals and Radicals had entered the House of Commons now that it would be impossible for any Liberal Government to hold office on the terms which had of late been conceded to Lord Palmerston. Mr. Gladstone had always been credited with a sensitive earnestness of temper which was commonly believed to have given trouble to his more worldly and easy-going colleagues in the Cabinet of Lord Palmerston. It was to many people a problem of deep interest to see whether the genius of Mr. Gladstone would prove equal to the trying task of leadership under circumstances of such peculiar difficulty. Tact, according to many, was the quality needed for the work —not genius.

Some new men were coming up on both sides of the political field. Among these we have already mentioned Mr. Forster, who had taken a conspicuous part in the debates on the American Civil War. Mr. Forster was a man of considerable Parliamentary aptitude; a debater, who though not pretending to eloquence, was argumentative, vigorous, and persuasive. He had practical knowledge of English politics and social affairs, and was thoroughly representative of a very solid body of English public opinion. In the House of Lords the Duke of Argyll was beginning to take a prominent and even a leading place. The Duke of Argyll would have passed as a middle-aged man in ordinary life, but he was looked on

by many as a sort of boy in politics. He had, indeed, begun life very soon. At this time he was some forty-three years of age, and he had been a prominent public man for more than twenty years. The Duke of Argyll, then Marquis of Lorne, was only nineteen years old when he wrote a pamphlet called 'Advice to the Peers.' A little later he engaged in the famous struggle concerning the freedom of the Church of Scotland, which resulted in the great secession headed by Dr. Chalmers, and the foundation of the Free Church. He became Duke of Argyll on the death of his father in 1847. He did battle in the House of Lords as he had done out of it. He distinguished himself by plunging almost instantaneously into the thick of debate. He very much astonished the staid and formal peers, who had been accustomed to discussion conducted in measured tones, and with awful show of deference to age and political standing. The Duke of Argyll spoke upon any and every subject with astonishing fluency, and without the slightest reverence for years and authority. The general impression of the House of Lords for a long time was that youthful audacity, and nothing else, was the chief characteristic of the Duke of Argyll; and for a long time the Duke of Argyll did a good deal to support that impression. After a while he began to show that there was more in him than self-confidence. The House of Lords found that he really knew a good deal, and had a wonderfully clear head, and they learned to endure his dogmatic and professorial ways; but he never grew to be popular amongst them. His style was far too self-assured; his faith in his own superiority to everybody else was too evident to allow of his having many enthusiastic admirers. He soon, however, got into high office. With his rank, his talents, and his energy, such a thing was inevitable. He joined the Government of Lord Aberdeen in 1852 as Lord Privy Seal, holding an office of dignity, but no special duties, the occupant of which has only to give his assistance in council and general debate. He was afterwards Postmaster-General for two or three years. Under Lord Palmerston, in 1859, he became Lord Privy Seal again, and he retained that office in the Cabinet of Lord Russell.

There were some rising men on the Tory side. Sir Hugh Cairns, afterwards Lord Chancellor and a peer, had fought his way by sheer talent and energy into the front rank of Opposition. A lawyer from Belfast, and the son of middle-class

parents, he had risen into celebrity and influence while yet he was in the very prime of life. He was a lawyer whose knowledge of his own craft might fairly be called profound. He was one of the most effective debaters in Parliament. His resources of telling argument were almost inexhaustible, and his training at the bar gave him the faculty of making the best at the shortest notice of all the facts he was able to bring to bear on any question of controversy. He showed more than once that he was capable of pouring out an animated and even a passionate invective. An orator in the highest sense he certainly was not. No gleam of imagination softened or brightened his lithe and nervous logic. No deep feeling animated and inspired it. His speeches were arguments not eloquence; instruments not literature. But he was on the whole the greatest political lawyer since Lyndhurst; and he was probably a sounder lawyer than Lyndhurst. He had above all things skill and discretion. Sir Stafford Northcote was a man of ability, who had an excellent financial training under no less a teacher than Mr. Gladstone himself. But Sir Stafford Northcote, although a fluent speaker, was not a great debater, and moreover he had but little of the genuine Tory in him. He was a man of far too modern a spirit and training to be a genuine Tory. He was not one whit more Conservative than most of the Whigs. Mr. Gathorne Hardy, afterwards Lord Cranbrook, was a man of ingrained Tory instincts rather than convictions. He was a powerful speaker of the rattling declamatory kind; fluent as the sand in an hour-glass is fluent; stirring as the roll of a drum is stirring; sometimes dry as the sand and empty as the drum. A man of far higher ability and of really great promise was Lord Robert Cecil, afterwards Lord Cranborne, and now Marquis of Salisbury. Lord Robert Cecil was at this time the ablest scion of noble Toryism in the House of Commons. He was younger than Lord Stanley, and he had not Lord Stanley's solidity, caution, or political information. But he had more originality; he had brilliant ideas; he was ready in debate; and he had a positive genius for saying bitter things in the bitterest tone. The younger son of a great peer, he had at one time no apparent chance of succeeding to the title and the estates. He had accepted honourable poverty, and was glad to help out his means by the use of his very clever pen. He wrote in several publications, it was said; especially in the *Quarterly Review*, the time-honoured and somewhat time-worn organ

of Toryism; and after a while certain political articles in the *Quarterly* came to be identified with his name. He was an ultra-Tory; a Tory on principle, who would hear of no compromise. One great object of his political writings appeared to be to denounce Mr. Disraeli, his titular leader, and to warn the party against him. For a long time he was disliked by most persons in the House of Commons. His gestures were ungainly; his voice was singularly unmusical and harsh; and the extraordinary and wanton bitterness of his tongue set the ordinary listeners against him. He seemed to take a positive delight in being gratuitously offensive. Lord Robert Cecil, therefore, although a genuine Tory, or perhaps because he was a genuine Tory, could not as yet be looked upon as a man likely to render great service to his party. He was just as likely to turn against them at some moment of political importance. He would not fall in with the discipline of the party; he would not subject his opinions or his caprices to its supposed interests. Some men on his own side of the House disliked him. Many feared him; some few admired him; no one regarded him as a trustworthy party man.

Lord Russell's Government had hardly come into power before they found that some troublesome business awaited them, and that the trouble as usual had arisen in a wholly unthought-of quarter. For some weeks there was hardly anything talked of, we might almost say hardly anything thought of, in England, but the story of the rebellion that had taken place in the island of Jamaica, and the manner in which it had been suppressed and punished. The first story came from English officers and soldiers who had themselves helped to crush or to punish the supposed rebellion. All that the public here could gather from the first narratives that found their way into print was, that a negro insurrection had broken out in Jamaica, and that it had been promptly crushed; but that its suppression seemed to have been accompanied by a very carnival of cruelty on the part of the soldiers and their volunteer auxiliaries. Some of the letters sent home reeked with blood. In these letters there was no question of contending with or suppressing an insurrection. The insurrection, such as it was, had been suppressed. The writers only gave a description of a sort of hunting expedition among the negro inhabitants for the purpose of hanging and flogging. It also became known that a coloured member of the Jamaica House of Assembly, a man named George William Gordon, who was suspected of inciting the

rebellion, and had surrendered himself at Kingston, was put on board an English war vessel there, taken to Morant Bay, where martial law had been proclaimed, tried by a sort of drumhead court-martial, and instantly hanged.

Such news naturally created a profound sensation in England. The Aborigines' Protection Society, the Anti-Slavery Society, and other philanthropic bodies, organised a deputation, immense in its numbers, and of great influence as regarded its composition, to wait on Mr. Cardwell, Secretary for the Colonies, at the Colonial Office, and urge on him the necessity of instituting a full inquiry and recalling Governor Eyre. The deputation was so numerous that it had to be received in a great public room, and indeed the whole scene was more like that presented by some large popular meeting than by a deputation to a minister. Mr. Cardwell suspended Mr. Eyre temporarily from his functions as Governor, and sent out a Commission of Inquiry to investigate the whole history of the rebellion and the repression, and to report to the Government. The Commission held a very long and careful inquiry. The history of the events in Jamaica formed a sad and shocking narrative. Jamaica had long been in a more or less disturbed condition; at least it had long been liable to periodical fits of disturbance. What we may call the planter class still continued to look on the negroes as an inferior race hardly entitled to any legal rights. The negroes were naturally only too ready to listen to any denunciations of the planter class, and to put faith in any agitation which promised to secure them some property in the land. The negroes had undoubtedly some serious grievances. They constantly complained that they could not get justice administered to them when any dispute arose between white and black. The Government had found that there was some ground for complaints of this kind at the time when it was proposed by the Jamaica Bill to suspend the constitution of the island. In 1865, however, the common causes of dissatisfaction were freshly and further complicated by a dispute about what were called the 'back lands.' Lands belonging to some of the great estates in Jamaica had been allowed to run out of cultivation. They were so neglected by their owners that they were turning into mere bush. The quit-rents due on them to the Crown had not been paid for seven years. The negroes were told that if they paid the arrears of quit-rent they might cultivate these lands and enjoy

them free of rent. It may be remarked that the tendency in Jamaica had almost always hitherto been for the Crown officials to take the part of the negroes, and for the Jamaica authorities to side with the local magnates. Trusting to the assurance given, some of the negroes paid the arrears of quit-rent, and brought the land into cultivation. The agent of one of the estates, however, reasserted the right of his principal, who had not been a consenting party to the arrangement, and he endeavoured to evict the negro occupiers of the land. The negroes resisted, and legal proceedings were instituted to turn them out. The legal proceedings were still pending when the events took place which gave occasion to so much controversy.

On October 7, 1865, some disturbances took place on the occasion of a magisterial meeting at Morant Bay, a small town on the south-east corner of the island. The negroes appeared to be in an excited state, and many persons believed that an outbreak was at hand. An application was made to the Governor for military assistance. The Governor of Jamaica was Mr. Edward John Eyre, who had been a successful explorer in Central, West, and Southern Australia, had acted as resident magistrate and protector of aborigines in the region of the Lower Murray in Australia, and had afterwards been Lieutenant-Governor of New Zealand, of the Leeward Islands, and of other places. All Mr. Eyre's dealings with native races up to this time would seem to have earned for him the reputation of a just and humane man. The Governor despatched a small military force by sea to the scene of the expected disturbances. Warrants had been issued meanwhile by the Custos or chief magistrate of the parish in which Morant Bay is situated, for the arrest of some of the persons who had taken part in the previous disturbances. When the warrants were about to be put into execution, resistance by force was offered. The police were overpowered, and some were beaten, and others compelled to swear that they would not interfere with the negroes. On the 11th the negroes, armed with sticks, and the 'cutlasses' used in the work of the sugar-cane fields, assembled in considerable numbers in the square of the Court House in Morant Bay. The magistrates were holding a meeting there. The mob made for the Court House; the local volunteer force came to the help of the magistrates. The Riot Act was being read when some stones were thrown. The volunteers fired, and some negroes were seen to fall. Then the rioters attacked the

Court House. The volunteers were few in number, and were easily overpowered; the Court House was set on fire; eighteen persons, the Custos among them, were killed, and about thirty were wounded; and a sort of incoherent insurrection suddenly spread itself over the neighbourhood. The moment, however, that the soldiers sent by the Governor, at first only one hundred in number, arrived upon the scene of disturbance, the insurrection collapsed and vanished. There never was the slightest attempt made by the rioters to keep the field against the troops. The soldiers had not in a single instance to do any fighting. The only business left to them was to hunt out supposed rebels, and bring them before military tribunals. So evanescent was the whole movement that it is to this day a matter of dispute whether there was any rebellion at all, properly so called; whether there was any organised attempt at insurrection; or whether the disturbances were not the extemporaneous work of a discontented and turbulent mob, whose rush to rescue some of their friends expanded suddenly into an effort to wreak old grievances on the nearest representatives of authority.

At this time Jamaica was ruled by the Governor and Council, and the House of Assembly. Among the members of the Assembly was George William Gordon. Gordon was a Baptist by religion, and had in him a good deal of the fanatical earnestness of the field-preacher. He was a vehement agitator and a devoted advocate of what he considered to be the rights of the negroes. He appears to have had a certain amount of eloquence. He was just the sort of man to make himself a nuisance to white colonists and officials who wanted to have everything their own way. Gordon was in constant disputes with the authorities, and with Governor Eyre himself. He had been a magistrate, but was dismissed from the magistracy in consequence of the alleged violence of his language in making accusations against another justice. He had taken some part in getting up meetings of the coloured population; he had made many appeals to the Colonial Office in London against this or that act on the part of the Governor or the Council, or both. He had been appointed churchwarden, but was declared disqualified for the office in consequence of his having become a 'Native Baptist;' and he had brought an action to recover what he held to be his rights. He had come to hold the position of champion of the rights and claims of the black man against the white. He was a sort of constitu-

tional Opposition in himself. The Governor seems to have at once adopted the conclusion urged on him by others, that Gordon was at the bottom of the insurrectionary movement.

On October 13, the Governor proclaimed the whole of the county of Surrey, with the exception of the city of Kingston, under martial law. Jamaica is divided into three counties; Surrey covering the eastern and southern portion, including the region of the Blue Mountains, the towns of Port Antonio and Morant Bay, and the considerable city of Kingston, with its population of some thirty thousand. Middlesex comprehends the central part of the island, and contains Spanish Town, then the seat of Government. The western part of the island is the county of Cornwall. Mr. Gordon lived near Kingston, and had a place of business in the city; and he seems to have been there attending to his business, as usual, during the days while the disturbances were going on. The Governor ordered a warrant to be issued for Gordon's arrest. When this fact became known to Gordon, he went to the house of the General in command of the forces at Kingston and gave himself up. The Governor had him put at once on board a war steamer, and conveyed to Morant Bay. Having given himself up in a place where martial law did not exist, where the ordinary courts were open, and where, therefore, he would have been tried with all the forms and safeguards of the civil law, he was purposely carried away to a place which had been put under martial law. Here an extraordinary sort of court-martial was sitting. It was composed of two young navy lieutenants and an ensign in one of her Majesty's West India regiments. Gordon was hurried before this grotesque tribunal, charged with high treason, found guilty, and sentenced to death. The sentence was approved by the officer in command of the troops sent to Morant Bay. It was then submitted to the Governor, and approved by him also. It was carried into effect without much delay. The day following Gordon's conviction was Sunday, and it was not thought seemly to hang a man on the Sabbath. He was allowed, therefore, to live over that day. On the morning of Monday, October 23, Gordon was hanged. He bore his fate with great heroism, and wrote just before his death a letter to his wife, which is full of pathos in its simple and dignified manliness. He died protesting his innocence of any share in disloyal conspiracy or insurrectionary purpose.

The whole of the proceedings connected with the trial of

Gordon were absolutely illegal from first to last. The act which conveyed Mr. Gordon from the protection of civil law to the authority of a drumhead court-martial was grossly illegal. The tribunal was constituted in curious defiance of law and precedent. It is contrary to all authority to form a court-martial by mixing together the officers of the two different services. It was an unauthorised tribunal, however, even if considered as only a military court-martial, or only a naval court-martial. The prisoner thus brought by unlawful means before an illegal tribunal was tried upon testimony taken in ludicrous opposition to all the rules of evidence. Such as the evidence was, however, compounded of scraps of the paltriest hearsay, and of things said when the prisoner was not present, it testified rather to the innocence than to the guilt of the prisoner. By such a court, on such evidence, Gordon was put to death.

Meanwhile the carnival of repression was going on. For weeks the hangings, the floggings, the burnings of houses were kept up. The report of the Royal Commissioners stated that 439 persons were put to death, and that over six hundred, including many women, were flogged, some under circumstances of revolting cruelty. When the story reached England in clear and trustworthy form, an association called the Jamaica Committee was formed for the avowed purpose of seeing that justice was done. It comprised some of the most illustrious Englishmen. Men became members of that committee who had never taken part in public agitation of any kind before. Another association was founded, on the opposite side, for the purpose of sustaining Governor Eyre, and it must be owned that it too had great names. Mr. Mill may be said to have led the one side. and Mr. Carlyle the other. The natural bent of each man s genius and temper turned him to the side of the Jamaica negroes, or of the Jamaica Governor. Mr. Tennyson, Mr. Kingsley, Mr. Ruskin, followed Mr. Carlyle; we know now that Mr. Dickens was of the same way of thinking. Mr. Herbert Spencer, Professor Huxley, Mr. Goldwin Smith, were in agreement with Mr. Mill. The case on either side may be briefly stated. The more reasonable of those who supported Mr. Eyre contended that at a terrible crisis Mr. Eyre was confronted with the fearful possibility of a negro insurrection, and that he did the best he could. To this the opposite party answered that in fact the insurrection,

supposing it to have been an insurrection, was all over before the floggings, the hangings, and the burnings set in. Not merely were the troops masters of the field, but there was no armed enemy anywhere to be seen in the field or out of it. They contended that men are not warranted in inflicting wholesale and hideous punishments merely in order to strike such terror as may prevent the possibility of any future disturbance.

The Report of the Commissioners was made in April 1866. It declared in substance that the disturbances had their immediate origin in a planned resistance to authority, arising partly out of a desire to obtain the land free of rent, and partly out of the want of confidence felt by the labouring class in the tribunals by which most of the disputes affecting their interests were decided; that the disturbance spread rapidly, and that Mr. Eyre deserved praise for the skill and vigour with which he had stopped it in the beginning; but that martial law was kept in force too long; that the punishments inflicted were excessive; that the punishment of death was unnecessarily frequent; that the floggings were barbarous, and the burnings wanton and cruel; that although it was probable that Gordon, by his writings and speeches, had done much to bring about excitement and discontent, and thus rendered insurrection possible, yet there was no sufficient proof of his complicity in the outbreak, or in any organised conspiracy against the Government; and, indeed, that there was no wide-spread conspiracy of any kind. Of course this finished Mr. Eyre's career as a Colonial Governor. A new Governor, Sir J. P. Grant, was sent out to Jamaica, and a new Constitution was given to the island. The Jamaica Committee prosecuted Mr. Eyre and some of his subordinates, but the bills of indictment were always thrown out by the grand jury. After many discussions in Parliament, the Government in 1872—once again a Liberal Government—decided on paying Mr. Eyre the expenses to which he had been put in defending himself against the various prosecutions; and the House of Commons, after a long debate, agreed to the vote by a large majority. On the whole there was not any failure of justice. A career full of bright promise was cut short for Mr. Eyre, and for some of his subordinates as well; and no one accused Mr. Eyre personally of anything worse than a fury of mistaken zeal. The deeds which were done by his authority, or to which, when they were done, he gave his authority's sanc-

tion, were branded with such infamy that it is almost impossible such things could ever be done again in England's name. Even those who excused under the circumstances the men by whom the deeds were done, had seldom a word to say in defence of the acts themselves.

The Queen opened the new Parliament in person. She then performed the ceremony for the first time since the death of the Prince Consort. The speech from the throne contained a paragraph which announced that her Majesty had directed that information should be procured in reference to the right of voting in the election of members of Parliament, and that when the information was complete, 'the attention of Parliament will be called to the result thus obtained with a view to such improvements in the laws which regulate the right of voting in the election of members of the House of Commons as may tend to strengthen our free institutions, and conduce to the public welfare.' Some announcement on the subject of Reform was expected by everyone. The only surprise felt was perhaps at the cautious and limited way in which the proposed measure was indicated in the royal speech. While Radicals generally insisted that the strength of the old Whig party had been successfully exerted to compel a compromise and keep Mr. Gladstone down, most of the Tories would have it that Mr. Gladstone now had got it all his own way, and that the cautious vagueness of the Queen's Speech would only prove to be the prelude to very decisive and alarming changes in the Constitution. Not since the introduction by Lord John Russell of the measure which became law in 1832, had a Reform Bill been expected in England with so much curiosity, with so much alarm, and with so much disposition to a foregone conclusion of disappointment. On March 12 Mr. Gladstone introduced the bill. His speech was eloquent; but the House of Commons was not stirred. It was evident at once that the proposed measure was only a compromise of the most unattractive kind. The bill proposed to reduce the county franchise from fifty pounds to fourteen pounds, and the borough franchise from ten to seven pounds. The borough franchise of course was still the central question in any reform measure; and this was to be reduced by three pounds.

The man who could be enthusiastic over such a reform must have been a person whose enthusiasm was scarcely worth arousing. The peculiarity of the situation was,

that without a genuine popular enthusiasm nothing could be done. The House of Commons as a whole did not want reform. All the Conservatives were of course openly and consistently opposed to reform; not a few of the professing Liberals secretly detested it. Only a small number of men in the House were genuine in their anxiety for immediate change; and of these the majority were too earnest and extreme to care for a reform which only meant a reduction of the borough franchise from ten pounds to seven pounds. It seemed a ridiculous anti-climax, after all the indignant eloquence about 'unenfranchised millions,' to come down to a scheme for enfranchising a few hundreds here and there. Those who believed in the sincerity and high purpose of Lord Russell and Mr. Gladstone, and who therefore assumed that if they said this was all they could do there was nothing else to be done—these supported the bill. Mr. Bright supported it; somewhat coldly at first, but afterwards, when warmed by the glow of debate and of opposition, with all his wonted power. It was evident, however, that he was supporting Lord Russell and Mr. Gladstone rather than their Reform Bill. Mr. Mill supported the bill, partly no doubt for the same reason, and partly because it had the support of Mr. Bright. But it would have been hard to find anyone who said that he really cared much about the measure itself, or that it was the sort of thing he would have proposed if he had his way. The Conservatives as a man opposed the measure; and they had allies. Day after day saw new secessions of emboldened Whigs and half-hearted Liberals. The Ministerial side of the House was fast becoming demoralised. The Liberal party was breaking up into mutinous camps and unmanageable coteries.

Mr. Robert Lowe was the hero of the Opposition that fought against the bill. His attacks on the Government had, of course, all the more piquancy that they came from a Liberal, and one who had held office in two Liberal administrations. The Tory benches shouted and screamed with delight, as in speech after speech of admirable freshness and vigour Mr. Lowe poured his scathing sarcasms in upon the bill and its authors. Even their own leader and champion, Mr. Disraeli, became of comparatively small account with the Tories when they heard Mr. Lowe's invectives against their enemies. Much of Mr. Lowe's success was undoubtedly due to the manner in which he hit the tone and temper of the Conser-

vatives and of the disaffected Whigs. Applause and admiration are contagious in the House of Commons. When a great number of voices join in cheers and in praise, other voices are caught by the attraction, and cheer and praise out of the sheer infection of sympathy. It is needless to say that the applause reacts upon the orator. The more he feels that the House admires him, the more likely he is to make himself worthy of the admiration. The occasion told on Mr. Lowe. His form seemed, metaphorically at least, to grow greater and grander on that scene, as the enthusiasm of his admirers waxed and heated. Certainly he never after that time made any great mark by his speeches, or won back any of the fame as an orator which was his during that short and to him splendid period. But the speeches themselves were masterly as mere literary productions. Not many men could have fewer physical qualifications for success in oratory than Mr. Lowe. He had an awkward and ungainly presence; his gestures were angular and ungraceful; his voice was harsh and rasping; his articulation was so imperfect that he became now and then almost unintelligible; his sight was so short that when he had to read a passage or extract of any kind, he could only puzzle over its contents in a painful and blundering way, even with the paper held up close to his eyes; and his memory was not good enough to allow him to quote anything without the help of documents. How, it may be asked in wonder, was such a speaker as this to contend in eloquence with the torrent-like fluency, the splendid diction, the silver-trumpet voice of Gladstone; or with the thrilling vibrations of Bright's noble eloquence, now penetrating in its pathos, and now irresistible in its humour? Even those who well remember these great debates may ask themselves in unsatisfied wonder the same question now. It is certain that Mr. Lowe has not the most distant claim to be ranked as an orator with Mr. Gladstone or Mr. Bright. Yet it is equally certain that he did for that season stand up against each of them, against them both; against them both at their very best; and that he held his own.

Mr. Disraeli was thrown completely into the shade. Mr. Disraeli was not, it is said, much put out by this. He listened quietly, perhaps even contemptuously, looking upon the whole episode as one destined to pass quickly away. He did not believe that Mr. Lowe was likely to be a peer of Mr. Gladstone or Mr. Bright—or of himself—in debate. But for the time

Mr. Lowe was the master-spirit of the Opposition to the Reform Bill. In sparkling sentences, full of classical allusion and of illustrations drawn from all manner of literatures, he denounced and satirised demagogues, democratic governments, and every influence that tended to bring about any political condition which allowed of an ominous comparison with something in Athenian history. The Conservatives made a hero, and even an idol, of him. Shrewd old members of the party, who ought to have known better, were heard to declare that he was not only the greatest orator, but even the greatest statesman, of the day. In truth, Mr. Lowe was neither orator nor statesman. He had some of the gifts which are needed to make a man an orator, but hardly any of those which constitute a statesman. He was a literary man and a scholar, who had a happy knack of saying bitter things in an epigrammatic way; he really hated the Reform Bill, towards which Mr. Disraeli probably felt no emotion whatever, and he started into prominence as an anti-reformer just at the right moment to suit the Conservatives and embarrass and dismay the Liberal party. He was greatly detested for a time amongst the working classes, for whose benefit the measure was chiefly introduced. He not only spoke out with cynical frankness his own opinion of the merits and morals of the people 'who live in these small houses,' but he implied that all the other members of the House held the same opinion, if they would only venture to give it a tongue. He was once or twice mobbed in the streets; he was strongly disliked and dreaded for the hour by the Liberals; he was the most prominent figure on the stage during these weeks of excitement; and no doubt he was perfectly happy.

The debates on the bill brought out some speeches which have not been surpassed in the Parliamentary history of our time. Mr. Bright and Mr. Gladstone were at their very best. Mr. Bright likened the formation of the little band of malcontents to the doings of David in the cave of Adullam when he called about him 'every one that was in distress and every one that was discontented,' and became a captain over them. The allusion told upon the House with instant effect, for many had suspected and some had said that if Mr. Lowe had been more carefully conciliated by the Prime Minister at the time of his Government's formation, there might have been no such acrimonious opposition to the bill. The little third party were at once christened the Adullamites, and the name still

survives, and is likely long to survive its old political history. Mr. Gladstone's speech, with which the great debate on the second reading concluded, was aflame with impassioned eloquence. This speech was concluded on the morning of April 28. The debate which it brought to a close had been carried on for eight nights. The House of Commons was wrought up to a pitch of the most intense excitement when the division came to be taken. The closing passages of Mr. Gladstone's speech had shown clearly enough that he did not expect much of a triumph for the Government. The House was crowded to excess. The numbers voting were large beyond almost any other previous instance. There were for the second reading of the bill 318: there were against it 313. The second reading was carried by a majority of only five. The wild cheers of the Conservatives and the Adullamites showed that the bill was doomed. The question now was not whether the measure would be a failure, but only when the failure would have to be confessed. The time for the confession soon came. The opponents of the reform scheme kept pouring in amendments. These came chiefly from the Ministerial side of the House. Lord Dunkellin, usually a supporter of the Government, moved an amendment the effect of which would be to make the franchise a little higher than the Government proposed to fix it. Lord Dunkellin carried his amendment. Lord Russell and Mr. Gladstone accepted the situation, and resigned office.

The defeat of the bill and the resignation of the Ministry brought the political career of Lord Russell to a close. He took advantage of the occasion soon after to make a formal announcement that he handed over the task of leading the Liberal party to Mr. Gladstone. He appeared indeed in public life on several occasions after his resignation of office. He took part sometimes in the debates of the House of Lords; he even once or twice introduced measures there, and endeavoured to get them passed. Lord Russell's career, however, was practically at an end. It had been a long and an interesting career. It was begun amid splendid chances. Lord John Russell was born in the very purple of politics; he was cradled and nursed among statesmen and orators; the fervid breath of young liberty fanned his boyhood; his tutors, friends, companions, were the master-spirits who rule the fortunes of nations; he had the ministerial benches for a training ground, and had a seat in the Administration at his disposal when another young man might have been glad of a

seat in an opera box. He must have been brought into more or less intimate association with all the men and women worth knowing in Europe since the early part of the century. Lord John Russell had tastes for literature, for art, for philosophy, for history, for politics, and his æstheticism had the advantage that it made him seek the society and appreciate the worth of men of genius and letters. Thus he never remained a mere politician like Palmerston. His public career suggests a strange series of contradictions, or paradoxes. In Ireland he was long known rather as the author of the Ecclesiastical Titles Bill than as the early friend of Catholic Emancipation; in England as the parent of petty and abortive Reform Bills, rather than as the promoter of one great Reform Bill. Abroad and at home he came to be thought of as the Minister who disappointed Denmark and abandoned Poland, rather than as the earnest friend and faithful champion of oppressed nationalities. No statesman could be a more sincere and thorough opponent of slavery in all its forms and works; and yet in the mind of the American people, Lord Russell's name was for a long time associated with the idea of a scarcely-concealed support of the slaveholders' rebellion. Much of this curious contrast, this seeming inconsistency, is due to the fact that for the greater part of his public life Lord Russell's career was a mere course of see-saw between office and opposition. The sort of superstition that long prevailed in our political affairs limited the higher offices of statesmanship to two or three conventionally acceptable men on either side. If not Sir Robert Peel then it must be Lord John Russell; if it was not Lord Derby it must be Lord Palmerston. Therefore if the business of government was to go on at all, a statesman must take office now and then with men whom he could not mould wholly to his purpose, and must act in seeming sympathy with principles and measures which he would himself have little cared to originate. The personal life of Lord Russell was consistent all through. He began as a Reformer; he ended as a Reformer.

CHAPTER XXI.

REFORM.

THE Queen, of course, sent for Lord Derby. He had no personal desire to enter office once again; he had no inclination for official responsibilities. He was not very fond of work, even when younger and stronger, and the habitual indolence of his character had naturally grown with years, and just now with infirmities. It was generally understood that he would only consent to be the Prime Minister of an interval, and that whenever, with convenience to the interests of the State, some other hand could be entrusted with power, he would expect to be released from the trouble of official life. The prospect for a Conservative Ministry was not inviting. Lord Derby had hoped to be able to weld together a sort of coalition Ministry, which should to a certain extent represent both sides of the House. Accordingly, he at once invited the leading members of the Adullamite party to accept places in his Administration. He was met by disappointment. The Adullamite chiefs agreed to decline all such co-operation. When it was known that Mr. Lowe would not take office under Lord Derby, nobody cared what became of the other denizens of the Cave. Some of them were men of great territorial influence; some were men of long standing in Parliament. But they were absolutely unnoticed now that the crisis was over. They might take office or let it alone; the public at large were absolutely indifferent on the subject.

The session had advanced far towards its usual time of closing, when Lord Derby completed the arrangements for his Administration. Mr. Disraeli, of course, became Chancellor of the Exchequer and leader of the House of Commons. Lord Stanley was Foreign Secretary. Lord Cranborne, formerly Lord Robert Cecil, was entrusted with the care of India; Lord Carnarvon undertook the Colonies; General Peel became War Minister; Sir Stafford Northcote was President of the Board of Trade; and Mr. Walpole took on himself the management of the Home Office, little knowing what a troublous business he had brought upon his shoulders. Sir John Pakington boldly assumed the control of the Admiralty. On July 9 Lord Derby was able to announce to the Peers that he had put together his house of cards.

The new Ministry had hardly taken their places when a perfect storm of agitation broke out all over the country. The Conservatives and the Adullamites had both asserted that the working people in general were indifferent about the franchise; and a number of organisations now sprang into existence, having for their object to prove to the world that no such apathy prevailed. Reform Leagues and Reform Unions started up as if out of the ground. Public meetings of vast dimensions began to be held day after day for the purpose of testifying to the strength of the desire for Reform. The most noteworthy of these was the famous Hyde Park meeting. The Reformers of the metropolis determined to hold a monster meeting in the Park. The authorities took the very unwise course of determining to prohibit it, and a proclamation or official notice was issued to that effect. The Reformers were acting under the advice of Mr. Edmond Beales, president of the Reform League, a barrister of some standing, and a man of character and considerable ability. Mr. Beales was of opinion that the authorities had no legal power to prevent the meeting; and of course it need hardly be said that a Commissioner of Police, or even a Home Secretary, is not qualified to make anything legal or illegal by simply proclaiming it so. The London Reformers, therefore, determined to try their right with the authorities. On July 23, a number of processions, marching with bands and banners, set out from different parts of London and made for Hyde Park. The authorities had posted notices announcing that the gates of the Park would be closed at five o'clock that evening. When the first of the processions arrived at the Park the gates were closed, and a line of policemen was drawn outside. The president of the Reform League, Mr. Beales, and some other prominent Reformers, came up in a carriage, alighted, and endeavoured to enter the Park. They were refused admittance. They asked for the authority by which they were refused; and they were told it was the authority of the Commissioner of Police. They then quietly re-entered the carriage. It was their intention first to assert their right, and then, being refused, to try it in the regular and legal way. They went to Trafalgar Square, followed by a large crowd, and there a meeting was extemporised, at which resolutions were passed demanding the extension of the suffrage, and thanking Mr. Gladstone, Mr. Bright, and other men who had striven to obtain it. The speaking was short;

it was not physically possible to speak with any effect to so large an assemblage. Then that part of the demonstration came quietly to an end.

Meanwhile, however, a different scene had been going on at Hyde Park. A large and motley crowd had hung about the gates and railings. The crowd was composed partly of genuine Reformers, partly of mere sight-seers and curiosity-mongers, partly of mischievous boys, and to no inconsiderable extent of ordinary London roughs. Not a few of all sections, perhaps, were a little disappointed that things had gone so quietly off. The mere mass of people pressed and pressing round the railings would almost in any case have somewhat seriously threatened their security and tried their strength. The rails began to give way. There was a simultaneous impulsive rush, and some yards of railing were down, and men in scores were tumbling, and floundering, and rushing over them. The example was followed along Park Lane, and in a moment half a mile of iron railing was lying on the grass, and a tumultuous and delighted mob were swarming over the Park. The news ran wildly through the town. Some thought it a revolt; others were of opinion that it was a revolution. The first day of liberty was proclaimed here—the breaking loose of anarchy was shrieked at there. The mob capered and jumped over the sward for half the night through. Flower-beds and shrubs suffered a good deal, not so much from wanton destruction as from the pure boisterousness which came of an unexpected opportunity for horse-play. There were a good many little encounters with the police; stones were thrown on the one side and truncheons used on the other pretty freely; a detachment of foot guards was kept near the spot in readiness, but their services were not required. Indeed, the mob good-humouredly cheered the soldiers whenever they caught sight of them. A few heads were broken on both sides, and a few prisoners were made by the police; but there was no revolution, no revolt, no serious riot even, and no intention in the mind of any responsible person that there should be a riot. Mr. Disraeli that night declared in the House of Commons—half probably in jest, half certainly in earnest—that he was not quite sure whether he had still a house to go to. He found his house yet standing, and firmly roofed, when he returned home that night. London slept feverishly, and awoke next day to find things going on very much as before. Crowds hastened, half in amusement, half

in fear, to look upon the scene of the previous evening's turmoil. There were the railings down sure enough; and in the Park was still a large idle crowd, partly of harmless sightseers, partly of roughs, with a considerable body of police keeping order. But there was no popular rising; and London began once more to eat its meals in peace.

Nothing can well be more certain than the fact that the Hyde Park riot, as it was called, convinced her Majesty's Ministers of the necessity of an immediate adoption of the reform principle. The Government took the Hyde Park riot with portentous gravity. Mr. Beales and some of his colleagues waited upon the Home Secretary next day, for the purpose of advising him to withdraw the military and police from the Park, and leave it in the custody of the Reformers. Mr. Beales gravely lectured the Government for what they had done, and declared, as was undoubtedly the fact, that the foolish conduct of the Administration had been the original cause of all the disturbance. The Home Secretary, Mr. Walpole, a gentle and kindly man, had lost his head in the excitement of the hour. He mentally saw himself charged with the responsibility of civil strife and bloodshed. He was melted out of all self-command by the kindly bearing of Mr. Beales and the Reformers, and when they assured him that they were only anxious to help him to keep order, he fairly broke down and wept. He expressed himself with meek gratitude for their promised co-operation, and agreed to almost anything they could suggest. It was understood that the right of meeting in Hyde Park was left to be tested in some more satisfactory way at a future day, and the leaders of the Reform League took their departure undoubted masters of the situation.

All through the autumn and winter great meetings were held in the great towns and cities to promote the cause of reform. A most significant feature of these demonstrations was the part taken by the organised trades associations of working men. They were great in numbers, and most imposing in their silent united strength. They had grown into all that discipline and that power unpatronised by any manner of authority; unrecognised by the law, unless indeed where the law occasionally went out of its way to try to prevent or thwart the aims of their organisation. They had now grown to such strength that law and authority must see to make terms with them. The capitalist and all who share his

immediate interests; the employers, the rich of every kind, the aristocratic, the self-appointed public instructors, had all been against them; and they had nevertheless gone deliberately and stubbornly their own way. Sometimes they, or the cause they represented, had prevailed; often they and it had been defeated; but they had never acknowledged a defeat in principle, and they had kept on their own course undismayed, and, as many would have put it, unconvinced and unreconciled.

While England was thus occupied, stirring events were taking place elsewhere. In the interval between the resignation of Lord Russell and the completion of Lord Derby's ministry, Austria and Prussia had gone to war, and the leadership of Germany had been decisively won by Prussia. Venetia had been added to Italy, Prussia's ally in the war, and Austria had been excluded from any share in German affairs. English public instructors were for the most part completely agreed about the utter incapacity of the Prussians for the business of war, and the complete overthrow of Austria came with the shock of a bewildering surprise upon the great mass of our people.

Just before the adjournment of Parliament for the recess, a great work of peace was accomplished. This was the completion of the Atlantic cable. On the evening of July 27, 1866, the cable was laid between Europe and America. Next day Lord Stanley, as Foreign Minister, was informed that perfect communication existed between England and the United States by means of a thread of wire that lay beneath the Atlantic. Words of friendly congratulation and greeting were interchanged between the Queen and the President of the United States. Ten years all but a month or two had gone by since Mr. Cyrus W. Field, the American promoter of the Atlantic telegraph project, had first tried to inspire cool and calculating men in London, Liverpool, and Manchester with some faith in his project. It was not he who first thought of doing the thing, but it was he who first made up his mind that it could be done and showed the world how to do it, and did it in the end. The history of human invention has not a more inspiriting example of patience living down discouragement, and perseverance triumphing over defeat. The first attempt to lay the cable was made in 1857; but the vessels engaged in the expedition had only got about three hundred miles from the west coast of Ireland when the cable broke, and the effort had to be given up for that year. Next year the enterprise was renewed and

failed again. Another effort, however, was made that summer. The cable was actually laid. It did for a few days unite Europe and America. Messages of congratulation passed along between the Queen and the President of the United States. Suddenly, however, the signals became faint ; the messages grew inarticulate, and before long the power of communication ceased altogether. The cable became a mere cable again ; the wire that spoke with such a miraculous eloquence had become silent. The construction of the cable had proved to be defective, and a new principle had to be devised by science. Yet something definite had been accomplished. It had been shown that a cable could be stretched and maintained under the ocean more than two miles deep and two thousand miles across. Another attempt was made in 1865, but it proved again a failure, and the shivered cable had to be left for the time in the bed of the Atlantic. At last, in 1866, the feat was accomplished, and the Atlantic telegraph was added to the realities of life.

The autumn and winter of agitation passed away, and the time was at hand when the new Ministry must meet a new session of Parliament. The country looked with keen interest, and also with a certain amused curiosity, to see what the Government would do with Reform in the session of 1867. Parliament opened on February 5. The Speech from the Throne alluded, as everyone had expected that it would, to the subject of Reform. 'Your attention,' so ran the words of the speech, 'will again be called to the state of the representation of the people in Parliament ;' and then the hope was expressed that 'Your deliberations, conducted in a spirit of moderation and mutual forbearance, may lead to the adoption of measures which, without unduly disturbing the balance of political power, shall freely extend the elective franchise.' The hand of Mr. Disraeli, people said, was to be seen clearly enough in these vague and ambiguous phrases. How, it was asked, can the franchise be freely extended, in the Reformer's sense, without disturbing the balance of political power unduly, in Mr. Disraeli's sense? More and more the conviction spread that Mr. Disraeli would only try to palm off some worthless measure on the House of Commons, and, by the help of the insincere Reformers and Adullamites, endeavour to induce the majority to accept it. People had little idea, however, of the flexibility the Government were soon to display. The history of Parliament in our modern days, or indeed in any days that we know much of, has nothing like the proceedings of that extraordinary session.

On February 11 Mr. Disraeli announced that the Government had made up their minds to proceed 'by way of resolution.' The great difficulty, he explained, in the way of passing a Reform Bill was that the two great political parties could not be got to agree beforehand on any principles by which to construct a measure. 'Let us then, before we go to work at the construction of a Reform Bill this time, agree among ourselves as to what sort of a measure we want. The rest will be easy.' He therefore announced his intention to put into the Parliamentary cauldron a handful of resolutions, out of which, when they had been allowed to simmer, would miraculously arise the majestic shape of a good Reform Bill made perfect. The resolutions which Mr. Disraeli proposed to submit to the House were for the most part sufficiently absurd. Some of them were platitudes which it could not be worth anyone's while to take the trouble of affirming by formal resolution. But most of the resolutions embodied propositions such as no Prime Minister could possibly have expected the House to agree on without violent struggles, determined resistance, and eager divisions. The Liberal party, especially that section of it which acknowledged the authority of Mr. Bright, would have had to be beaten to its knees before it would consent to accept some of these devices. Mr. Disraeli seems to have learned almost at once, from the demeanour of the House, that it would be hopeless to press his resolutions. On February 25 he quietly substituted for them a sort of Reform Bill which he announced that the Government intended to introduce. The occupation franchise in boroughs was to be reduced to six pounds, and in counties to twenty pounds, in each case the qualification to be based on rating; that is, the right of a man to vote was to be made dependent on the arrangements by his local vestry or other rate-imposing body. There were to be all manner of 'fancy franchises.' There seemed something unintelligible, or at least mysterious, about the manner in which this bill was introduced. It was to all appearance not based upon the resolutions; certainly it made no reference to some of the more important of their provisions. It never had any substantial existence. The House of Commons received with contemptuous indifference Mr. Disraeli's explanation of its contents, and the very next day Mr. Disraeli announced that the Government had determined to withdraw it, to give up at the same time the whole plan of proceeding by resolution,

and to introduce a real and substantial Reform Bill in a few days.

Parliament and the public were amazed at these sudden changes. The whole thing seemed turning into burlesque. The session had seen only a few days, and here already was a third variation in the shape of the Government's reform project. To increase the confusion and scandal it was announced three or four days after that three leading members of the Cabinet—General Peel, Lord Carnarvon, and Lord Cranborne—had resigned. The whole story at last came out. The revelation was due to the 'magnificent indiscretion' of Sir John Pakington, whose lucky incapacity to keep a secret has curiously enriched one chapter of the political history of his time. In consequence of the necessary reconstruction of the Cabinet, Sir John Pakington was transferred from the Admiralty to the War Office, and had to go down to his constituents of Droitwich for re-election. In the fulness of his heart he told a story which set all England laughing. The Government, it would appear, started with two distinct Reform Bills, one more comprehensive and liberal, as they considered, than the other. The latter was kept ready only as a last resource, in case the first should meet with a chilling reception from the Conservatism of the House of Commons. In that emergency they proposed to be ready to produce their less comprehensive scheme. The more liberal measure was to have been strictly based on the resolutions. The Cabinet met on Saturday, February 23, and then, as Sir John Pakington said, he and others were under the impression that they had come to a perfect understanding; that they were unanimous; and that the comprehensive measure was to be introduced on Monday, the 25th. On that Monday, however, the Cabinet were hastily summoned together. Sir John rushed to the spot, and a piece of alarming news awaited him. Some leading members of the Cabinet had refused point blank to have anything to do with the comprehensive bill. Here was a coil! It was two o'clock. Lord Derby had to address a meeting of the Conservative party at half-past two. Mr. Disraeli had to introduce the bill, some bill, in the House of Commons at half-past four. Something must be done. Some bill must be introduced. All eyes, we may suppose, glanced at the clock. Sir John Pakington averred that there were only ten minutes left for decision. It is plain that no man, whatever his gift of statesmanship or skill of penmanship, can

draw up a complete Reform Bill in ten minutes. Now came into full light the wisdom and providence of those who had hit upon the plan of keeping a second-class bill, if we may use such an expression, ready for emergencies. Out came the second-class bill, and it was promptly resolved that Mr. Disraeli should go down to the House of Commons and gravely introduce that, as if it were the measure which the Government had all along had it in their minds to bring forward. Sir John defended that resolution with simple and practical earnestness. It was not a wise resolve, he admitted; but who can be certain of acting wisely with only ten minutes for deliberation? If they had had even an hour to think the matter over, he had no doubt, he said, that they would not have made any mistake. But they had not an hour, and there was an end of the matter. They had to do something; and so Mr. Disraeli brought in his second-class measure; the measure which Sir John Pakington's piquant explanation sent down into political history with the name of the 'Ten Minutes' Bill.'

The trouble arose, it seems, in this way. After the Cabinet broke up on the evening of Saturday, February 23, in seeming harmony, Lord Cranborne worked out the figures of the bill, and found that they would almost amount to household suffrage in some of the boroughs. That would never do, he thought; and so he tendered his resignation. This would almost, as a matter of course, involve other resignations too. Therefore came the hasty meeting of the Cabinet on Monday, the 25th, which Sir John Pakington described with such unconscious humour. Lord Cranborne, and those who thought with him, were induced to remain, on condition that the comprehensive bill should be quietly put aside, and the ten minutes' bill as quietly substituted. Unfortunately, the reception given to the ten minutes' bill was utterly discouraging. It was clear to Mr. Disraeli's experienced eye that it had not a chance from either side of the House. Mr. Disraeli made up his mind, and Lord Derby assented. There was nothing to be done but to fall back on the comprehensive measure. Unwilling colleagues must act upon their convictions and go. It would be idle to secure their co-operation by persevering further with a bill that no one would have. Therefore it was that on February 26 Mr. Disraeli withdrew his bill of the day before, the ten minutes' bill, and announced that the Government would go to work in good earnest, and bring in a real bill on March 18.

This proved to be the bill based on the resolutions; the comprehensive bill, which had been suddenly put out of sight at the hasty meeting of the Cabinet on Monday, February 25, as described in the artless and unforgotten eloquence of Sir John Pakington's Droitwich speech. Then General Peel, Lord Carnarvon, and Lord Cranborne resigned their offices. For the second time within ten years a Conservative Cabinet had been split up on a question of Reform and the Borough Franchise.

It must be owned that it required some courage and nerve on Mr. Disraeli's part to face the House of Commons with another scheme and a newly-constructed Cabinet, after all these surprises. The first thing to do was to reorganise the Cabinet by getting a new War Secretary, Colonial Secretary, and Secretary for India. Before March 8 this was accomplished. The men who had resigned carried with them into their retirement the respect of all their political opponents. During his short administration of India, Lord Cranborne had shown not merely capacity, for that everyone knew he possessed, but a gravity, self-restraint, and sense of responsibility, for which even his friends had not previously given him credit. Sir John Pakington became War Minister, Mr. Corry succeeding him as First Lord of the Admiralty. The Duke of Buckingham became Colonial Secretary. The administration of the India Department was transferred to Sir Stafford Northcote, whose place at the head of the Board of Trade thus vacated was taken by the Duke of Richmond. Then, having thrown their mutineers overboard, the Government went to work again at their Reform scheme. On March 18 Mr. Disraeli introduced the bill. As regarded the franchise, this measure proposed that in boroughs all who paid rates, or twenty shillings a year in direct taxation, should have the vote; and also that property in the funds and savings banks, and so forth, should be honoured with the franchise; and that there should be a certain educational franchise as well. The clauses for the extension of the franchise were counterbalanced and fenced around with all manner of ingeniously devised qualifications to prevent the force of numbers among the poorer classes from having too much of its own way. There was a disheartening elaborateness of ingenuity in all these devices. The machine was far too daintily adjusted; the checks and balances were too cleverly arranged by half; it was apparent to almost every eye that some parts of the

mechanism would infallibly get out of working order, and that some others would never get into it. Mr. Bright compared the whole scheme to a plan for offering something with one hand and quietly withdrawing it with the other. There was, however, one aspect of the situation which to many Reformers seemed decidedly hopeful. It was plain to them now that the Government were determined to do anything whatever in order to get a Reform Bill of some kind passed that year. They would have anything which could command a majority rather than nothing. Lord Derby afterwards frankly admitted that he did not see why a monopoly of Reform should be left to the Liberals; and Mr. Disraeli had clearly made up his mind that he would not go out of office this time on a Reform Bill.

The leading spirits of the Government were now determined to carry a Reform Bill that session, come what would. One by one, all Mr. Disraeli's checks, balances, and securities were abandoned. The fancy franchises were swept clear away. At various stages of the bill Mr. Disraeli kept announcing that if this or that amendment were carried against the Government, the Government would not go any further with the bill; but when the particular amendment was carried, Mr. Disraeli always announced that Ministers had changed their minds after all, and were willing to accept the new alteration. At last this little piece of formality began to be regarded by the House as mere ceremonial. The bill became in the end a measure to establish household suffrage pure and simple in the towns. The Reform Bill passed through its final stage on August 15, 1867. We may summarise its results thus concisely. It enfranchised in boroughs all male householders rated for the relief of the poor, and all lodgers resident for one year, and paying not less than 10*l.* a year rent; and in counties, persons of property of the clear annual value of 5*l.*, and occupiers of lands or tenements paying 12*l.* a year. It disfranchised certain small boroughs, and reduced the representation of other constituencies; it created several new constituencies; among others the borough of Chelsea and the borough of Hackney. It gave a third member to Manchester, Liverpool, Birmingham, and Leeds; it gave a representative to the University of London. It secured a sort of representation of minorities in certain constituencies by enacting that where there were to be three representatives, each elector should vote for only two candidates; and that in the City of London,

which has four members, each elector should only vote for three. The Irish and Scotch Reform Bills were put off for another year. We may, however, anticipate a little, and dispose of the Scotch and Irish Bills at once, the more especially as both proved to be very trivial and unsatisfactory. The Scotch Bill gave Scotland a borough franchise the same as that of England; and a county franchise based either on 5*l.* clear annual value of property, or an occupation of 14*l.* a year. The Government proposed at first to make the county occupation franchise the same as that in England. All qualification as to rating for the poor was, however, struck out of the bill by amendments, the rating systems of Scotland being unlike those of England. The Government then put in 14*l.* as the equivalent of the English occupier's 12*l.* rating franchise. Some new seats were given to Scotland, which the Government at first proposed to get by increasing the number of members of the House of Commons, but which they were forced by amendments to obtain by the disfranchisement of some small English boroughs. The Irish Bill is hardly worth mentioning. It left the county franchise as it was, 12*l.*, reduced the borough franchise from 8*l.* to 4*l.*, and did nothing in the way of redistribution.

While the English Reform Bill was passing through its several stages, the Government went deliberately out of their way to make themselves again ridiculous with regard to the public meetings in Hyde Park. The Reform League convened a public meeting to be held in that park on May 6. Mr. Walpole, on May 1, issued a proclamation intended to prevent the meeting, and warning all persons not to attend it. The League took legal advice, found that their meeting would not be contrary to law, and accordingly issued a counter proclamation asserting their right, and declaring that the meeting would be held in order to maintain it. The Government found out a little too late that the League had strict law on their side. The law gave to the Crown control over the parks, and the right of prosecuting trespassers of any kind; but it gave the Administration no power to anticipate trespass from the holding of a public meeting, and to prohibit it in advance. The meeting was held; it was watched by a large body of police and soldiers; but it passed over very quietly, and indeed to curious spectators looking for excitement seemed a very humdrum sort of affair. Mr. Walpole, the Home Secretary, who had long been growing weary of the thankless

troubles of his office at a time of such excitement, and who was not strong enough to face the difficulties of the hour, resigned his post. Mr. Walpole retained, however, his seat in the Cabinet. He was a man highly esteemed by all parties; a man of high principle and of amiable character. But he was not equal to the occasion when any difficulty arose, and he contrived to put himself almost invariably in the wrong when dealing with the Reform League. He exerted his authority at a wrong time, and in a wrong way; and he generally withdrew from his wrong position in somewhat too penitent and humble an attitude. He strained too far the authority of his place, and he did not hold high enough its dignity. He was succeeded in office by Mr. Gathorne Hardy, who left the Poor Law Board to become Home Secretary.

The Reform Bill then was passed. The 'Leap in the Dark' was taken. Thus did the Prime Minister, Lord Derby, describe the policy of himself and his colleagues. The phrase has become historical, and its authorship is invariably ascribed to Lord Derby. It was in fact Lord Cranborne who first used it. During the debates in the House of Commons he had taunted the Government with taking a leap in the dark. Lord Derby adopted the expression, and admitted it to be a just description of the movement which he and his Ministry had made. It is impossible to deny that the Government acted sagaciously in settling the question so promptly and so decisively; in agreeing to almost anything rather than postpone the settlement of the controversy even for another year. But one is still lost in wonder at the boldness, the audacity, with which the Conservative Government threw away in succession every principle which they had just been proclaiming essential to Conservatism, and put on Radicalism in its stead. The one thing, however, which most people were thinking of in the autumn of 1867 was that the Reform question was settled at last, and for a long time. Mr. Lowe is entitled to the closing word of the controversy. The working men, the majority, the people who live in the small houses, are enfranchised; 'we must now,' Mr. Lowe said, 'at least educate our new masters.'

While this great measure of domestic reform was being accomplished a great colonial reform was quietly carried out. On February 19, 1867, Lord Carnarvon, Secretary for the Colonies, moved the second reading of the Bill for the Confederation of the North American Provinces of the British

Empire. This was in fact a measure to carry out in practical form the great principles which Lord Durham had laid down in his celebrated report. The bill prepared by Lord Carnarvon proposed that the provinces of Ontario and Quebec, in other words Upper and Lower Canada, along with Nova Scotia and New Brunswick, should be joined in one federation, to be called the Dominion of Canada, having a central or federal Parliament, and local or state Legislatures. The central Parliament was to consist of a Senate and a House of Commons. The Senate was to be made up of seventy members nominated by the Governor-General for life, on a summons from under the Great Seal of Canada. The House of Commons was to be filled by members elected by the people of the province according to population, at the rate of one member for every 17,000 persons, and the duration of a Parliament was not to be more than five years. The executive was vested in the Crown, represented of course by the Governor-General. The central Parliament manages the common affairs; each province has its own local laws and legislature. There is the greatest possible variety and diversity in the local systems of the different provinces of the Dominion. The members are elected to the House of Commons on the most diverse principles of suffrage. In some of the provinces the vote is open; in others it is given by ballot, in secret. The Dominion scheme only provided at first for the Confederation of the two Canadian provinces with Nova Scotia and New Brunswick. Provision was made, however, for the admission of any other province of British North America which should desire to follow suit. The newly constructed province of Manitoba, made up out of what had been the Hudson's Bay territories, was the first to come in. It was admitted into the union in 1870. British Columbia and Vancouver's Island followed in 1871, and Prince Edward's Island claimed admission in 1873. The Dominion now embraces the whole of the regions constituting British North America, with the exception of Newfoundland, which still prefers its lonely system of quasi-independence. It may be assumed, however, that this curious isolation will not last long; and the Act constituting the Dominion opens the door for the entrance of this latest lingerer outside whenever she may think fit to claim admission.

The idea of a federation of the provinces of British North America was not new in 1867, or even in the days of Lord

Durham. When the delegates of the revolted American colonies were discussing among themselves their terms of federation, they agreed in their articles of union, that Canada 'acceding to the Confederation and joining in the measures of the United States, shall be admitted into and entitled to the advantages of the union.' No answer to this appeal was made by either of the Canadas, but the idea of union among the British provinces among themselves evidently took root then. As early as 1810 a colonist put forward a somewhat elaborate scheme for the union of the provinces. In 1814 Chief Justice Sewell, of Quebec, submitted a plan of union to the Duke of Kent. In 1827 resolutions were introduced into the Legislative Assembly of Upper Canada, having relation principally to a combination of the two Canadas, but also suggesting something 'more politic, wise, and generally advantageous; viz. an union of the whole four provinces of North America under a viceroyalty, with a facsimile of that great and glorious fabric, the best monument of human wisdom, the British Constitution.' Nothing further, however, was done to advance the principle of federation until after the rebellion in Canada, and the brief dictatorship of Lord Durham. Then, as we have already said, the foundation of the system was laid. In 1849 an association, called the North American League, was formed, which held a meeting in Toronto to promote Confederation. In 1854 the Legislative Assembly of Nova Scotia discussed and adopted resolutions recommending the closer connection of the British provinces; and in 1857 the same province urged the question upon the consideration of Mr. Labouchere, afterwards Lord Taunton, and then Colonial Secretary. Mr. Labouchere seems to have thought that the Imperial Government had better not meddle or make in the matter, but leave it altogether for the spontaneous action of the colonists. In the following year the coalition Ministry of Canada, during the Governor-Generalship of Sir Francis Head, made a move by entering into communications with the Imperial Government and with the other American provinces. The other provinces hung back however, and nothing came of this effort. Then Nova Scotia tried to get up a scheme of union between herself, New Brunswick, and Prince Edward's Island. Canada offered to enter into the scheme; and in 1864 Mr. Cardwell, then Colonial Secretary, gave it his approval. New conferences were held in Quebec, but the plan was not successful. New Brunswick seems to have held

back this time. It was clear, however, that the provinces were steadily moving toward an agreement, and that a basis of federation would be found before long. The maritime provinces always felt some difficulty in seeing their way to union with the Canadas. Their outlying position and their distance from the proposed seat of central government made one obvious reason for hesitation. Even at the time when the bill for Confederation was introduced into the House of Lords, Nova Scotia was still holding back. That difficulty, however, was got over, and the Act was passed in March 1867. Lord Monck was made the first Governor-General of the new Dominion, and its first Parliament met at Ottawa in November of the same year.

In 1869—we are now somewhat anticipating—the Dominion was enlarged by the acquisition of the famous Hudson's Bay territory. When the Charter of the Hudson's Bay Company, which dated from the reign of Charles II., expired in 1869, Lord Granville, then Colonial Secretary, proposed that the chief part of the Company's territories should be transferred to the Dominion for 300,000*l.*; and the proposition was agreed to on both sides. The Red River country, a portion of the transferred territory, rose in rebellion, and refused to receive the new Governor. Louis Riel, the insurgent chief, seized on Fort Garry and the Company's treasury, and proclaimed the independence of the settlement. Colonel Wolseley, now Lord Wolseley, was sent in command of an expedition which reached Fort Garry on August 23, when the insurgents submitted without resistance, and the district received the name of Manitoba. Thus the Dominion of Canada now stretches from ocean to ocean. The population of British North America did not exceed one million and a half in 1841, at the time of the granting of the Constitution, and it is now over four millions. The revenue of the provinces has multiplied more than twentyfold during the same time. Canada has everything that ought to make a commonwealth great and prosperous. The fisheries of her maritime provinces, the coal and iron of the Atlantic and Pacific coasts, the grain-producing regions of the North-West, the superb St. Lawrence, hardly rivalled on the globe as a channel of commerce from the interior of a country to the ocean—all these are guarantees of a great future.

Equal with Canada in importance are the Australian islands. Australia now consists of five separate colonies—

New South Wales, Victoria, Western Australia, South Australia, and Queensland; all these are provinces of one vast island, the largest island in the world. New Zealand and Tasmania are other islands of the Australasian group. All these colonies have now representative government, with responsible ministries and parliamentary Chambers. New South Wales is the oldest of the provinces of Australia. Its political life may be said to date from 1853, when it first received what is fairly to be called a constitution. For ten years previously it had possessed a sort of legislature, consisting of a single Chamber, of which half the members were nominee, and the other half elected. One of the most distinguished members of that Chamber for many years was Mr. Lowe, who appears to have learned to hate democratic government from watching over its earliest infancy, as some women imbibe a dislike to all children from having had to do too much nursery-work in their girlhood. Victoria, which was separated from New South Wales in 1851, got her liberal constitution in 1856. The other colonies followed by degrees. The constitutional systems differ among themselves as to certain of their details. The electoral qualification, for example, differs considerably. Generally speaking, however, they may be set down as all alike illustrating the principles and exercising the influence of representative government. They have not got on so far without much confusion and many sad mistakes. The constitutional controversies and difficulties in Victoria and in other Australian colonies are a favourite example with some writers and speakers, to show the failure of the democratic principle in government. But it is always forgotten that the principle of representative government in a colony like Victoria is, as a matter of necessity, that of democracy. Even those who believe the aristocratic influence invaluable in the life of a nation must see that New South Wales and Victoria and Queensland must somehow contrive to do without such an influence. An aristocracy cannot be imported; nor can it be sown in the evening to grow up next morning. The colonists are compelled to construct a system without it. There are many difficulties in their way. It is often carelessly said that they ought to find the work easy enough, because they have the example and the experience of England to guide them. But they have no such guide. The conditions under which the colonies have to create a constitutional system are entirely different from those of Eng-

land; so different, indeed, that there must be a certain danger of going astray simply from trying to follow England's example under circumstances entirely unlike those of England.

CHAPTER XXII.

STRIFE AT HOME AND ABROAD.

On February 16, 1866, Lord Russell told the House of Lords, and Sir George Grey announced to the House of Commons, that the Government intended to suspend the *Habeas Corpus* Act in Ireland, and that both Houses of Parliament were to be called together next day for the purpose of enabling the Ministry to carry out this resolve. The next day was Saturday, an unusual day for a Parliamentary sitting at any early part of the session; unusual, indeed, when the session had only just begun. The Government could only excuse such a summons to the Lords and Commons on the plea of absolute urgency; and the word soon went round in the lobbies that a serious discovery had been made, and that a conspiracy of a formidable nature was preparing a rebellion in Ireland. The two Houses met next day, and a measure was introduced to suspend the *Habeas Corpus* Act in Ireland, and give the Lord-Lieutenant almost unlimited power to arrest and detain suspected persons. It seems almost superfluous to say that such a bill was not allowed to pass without some comment, and even some opposition, in the House of Commons. Mr. Mill spoke against it. Mr. Bright made a speech which has always since been regarded as in every sense one of the very finest he ever delivered. The measure however was run through its three readings in both Houses in the course of the day. The House of Lords had to keep up their sitting until the document should arrive from Osborne to authorise the Commissioners to give the Queen's assent to the bill. The Lords, therefore, having discussed the subject sufficiently to their satisfaction at a comparatively early hour of the evening, suspended the sitting until eleven at night. They then resumed, and waited patiently for the authority to come from Osborne, where the Queen was staying. Shortly before midnight the needful authority arrived, and the bill became law at twenty minutes before one o'clock on Sunday morning.

The Fenian movement differed from nearly all previous movements of the same kind in Ireland, in the fact that it arose and grew into strength without the patronage or the help of any of those who might be called the natural leaders of the people. In 1798 and in 1848 some men of great ability, or strength of purpose, or high position, or all attributes combined, made themselves leaders, and the others followed. In 1798 the rising had the impulse of almost intolerable personal as well as national grievance; but it is doubtful whether any formidable and organised movement might have been made but for the leadership of such men as Wolfe Tone and Lord Edward Fitzgerald. In 1848 there were such impulses as the traditional leadership of Smith O'Brien, the indomitable purpose of Mitchel, and the impassioned eloquence of Meagher. But Fenianism seemed to have sprung out of the very soil of Ireland itself. Its leaders were not men of high position, or distinguished name, or proved ability. They were not of aristocratic birth; they were not orators; they were not powerful writers. It was not the impulse of the American Civil War that engendered Fenianism; although that war had great influence on the manner in which Fenianism shaped its course. Fenianism had been in existence, in fact, although it had not got its peculiar name, long before the American War created a new race of Irishmen—the Irish-American soldiers—to turn their energies and their military inclination to a new purpose.

Agitation in the form of secret association had never ceased in Ireland. One result of prosecutions for seditious speaking and writing in Ireland is invariably the encouragement of secret combination. The suspension of the *Habeas Corpus* Act, in consequence of the 1848 movement, led, as a matter of course, to secret association. Before the trials of the Irish leaders were well over in that year, a secret association was formed by a large number of young Irishmen in cities and towns. It was got up by young men of good character and education; it spread from town to town; it was conducted with the most absolute secrecy; it had no informer in its ranks. It had its oath of fidelity and its regular leaders, its nightly meetings, and even to a limited and cautious extent its nightly drillings. It was a failure, because in the nature of things it could not be anything else. The young men had not arms enough anywhere to render them formidable in any one place; and the necessity of carrying on their communica-

tions with different towns in profound secrecy, and by roundabout ways of communication, made a prompt concerted action impossible. After two or three attempts to arrange for a simultaneous rising had failed, or had ended only in little abortive and isolated ebullitions, the young men became discouraged. Some of the leaders went to France, some to the United States, some actually to England; and the association melted away. Some years after this, the 'Phœnix' clubs began to be formed in Ireland. They were for the most part associations of the peasant class; they led to some of the ordinary prosecutions and convictions; and that was all. After the Phœnix associations came the Fenians. The Fenians are said to have been the ancient Irish militia. The Fenian agitation began about 1858, and it came to perfection about the middle of the American Civil War. A convention was held in America, and the Fenian Association was resolved into a regular organised institution. A provisional government was established in New York, with all the array and the mechanism of an actual working administration.

The emigration of the Irish to America had introduced an entirely new element into political calculations. The Irish grew rapidly in numbers and in strength all over the United States. The constitutional system adopted there enabled them almost at once to become citizens of the Republic. They availed themselves of this privilege almost universally. The Irish working man, who had never probably had any chance of giving a vote in his own country, found himself in the United States a person of political power, whose vote was courted by the leaders of different parties, and whose sentiments were flattered by the wire-pullers of opposing factions. He was not slow to appreciate the value of this influence in its bearing on that political question which in all the sincerity of his American citizenship was still the dearest to his heart—the condition of Ireland. The Irish in the States made their political organisations the means of keeping up a constant agitation, having for its object to secure the co-operation of American parties in some designs against England. After the Civil War the feelings of almost all the political parties in the States, in the South as well as in the North, were hostile to England. At such a moment, and under such a condition of things, it is not surprising if many of the Fenian leaders in America should have thought it easy or at least quite possible to force the hand of the Government, and to bring on a war

with England. At all events, it is not surprising if they should have believed that the American Government would put forth little effort to prevent the Fenians from using the frontier of the United States as a basis of operations against England.

Meanwhile there began to be a constant mysterious influx of strangers into Ireland. They were strangers who for the most part had Celtic features and the bearing of American soldiers. They distributed themselves throughout the towns and villages; most of them had relatives or old friends here and there, to whom they told stories of the share they had had in the big war across the Atlantic and of the preparations that were making in the States for the accomplishment of Irish independence. All this time the Fenians in the States were filling the columns of friendly journals with accounts of the growth of their organisation and announcements of the manner in which it was to be directed to its purpose. After a while things went so far that the Fenian leaders in the United States issued an address, announcing that their officers were going to Ireland to raise an army there for the recovery of the country's independence. Of course the Government here were soon quite prepared to receive them; and indeed the authorities easily managed to keep themselves informed by means of spies of all that was going on in Ireland. The spy system was soon flourishing in full force. Every considerable gathering of Fenians had amongst its numbers at least one person who generally professed a yet fiercer devotion to the cause than any of the rest, and who was in the habit of carrying to Dublin Castle every night his official report of what his Fenian colleagues had been doing. It is positively stated that in one instance a Protestant detective in the pay of the Government actually passed himself off as a Catholic, and took the Sacrament openly in a Catholic church in order to establish his Catholic orthodoxy in the eyes of his companions. One need not be a Catholic in order to understand the grossness of the outrage which conduct like this must seem to be in the eyes of all who believe in the mysteries of the Catholic faith. Meanwhile the Head Centre of Fenianism in America, James Stephens, who had borne a part in the movement in 1848, arrived in Ireland. He was arrested in the company of Mr. Charles J. Kickham, the author of many poems of great sweetness and beauty; a man of pure and virtuous character. Stephens was committed to Richmond Prison,

Dublin, early in November 1865; but before many days had passed the country was startled by the news that he had contrived to make his escape. The escape was planned with skill and daring. For a time it helped to strengthen the impression on the mind of the Irish peasantry that in Stephens there had at last been found an insurgent leader of adequate courage, craft, and good fortune.

Stephens disappeared for a moment from the stage. In the meantime disputes and dissensions had arisen among the Fenians in America. The schism had gone so far as to lead to the setting up of two separate associations. There were of course distracted plans. One party was for an invasion of Canada; another pressed for operations in Ireland itself. The Canadian attempt actually was made. A small body of Fenians, a sort of advance-guard, crossed the Niagara river on the night of May 31, 1866, occupied Fort Erie, and drove back the Canadian volunteers who first advanced against them. For a moment a gleam of success shone on the attempt; but the United States enforced the neutrality of their frontier lines with a sudden energy and strictness wholly unexpected by the Fenians. They prevented any further crossing of the river, and arrested several of the leaders on the American side. The Canadian authorities hurried up reinforcements; several Fenians were taken and shot; others recrossed the river, and the invasion scheme was over.

The Fenians then resolved to do something on the other side of the Atlantic. One venture was a scheme for the capture of Chester Castle. The plan was that a sufficient number of the Fenians in England should converge towards the ancient town of Chester, should suddenly appear there on a given day in February 1867, capture the castle, seize the arms they found there, cut the telegraph wires, make for Holyhead, but a short distance by rail, seize on some vessels there, and then steam for the Irish coast. The Government were fully informed of the plot in advance; the police were actually on the look-out for the arrival of strangers in Chester, and the enterprise melted away. In March 1867 an attempt at a general rising was made in Ireland. It was a total failure; the one thing on which the country had to be congratulated was that it failed so completely and so quickly as to cause little bloodshed. Every influence combined to minimise the waste of life. The snow fell that spring as it had scarcely ever fallen before in the soft, mild climate of Ireland

Silently, unceasingly it came down all day long and all night long; it covered the roads and the fields; it made the gorges of the mountains untenable, and the gorges of the mountains were to be the encampments and the retreats of the Fenian insurgents. The snow fell for many days and nights, and when it ceased falling the insurrectionary movement was over. The insurrection was literally buried in that unlooked-for snow. There were some attacks on police barracks in various places—in Cork, in Kerry, in Limerick, in Tipperary, in Louth; there were some conflicts with the police; there were some shots fired, many captures made, a few lives lost; and then for the time at least all was over.

There was, however, much feeling in England as well as in Ireland for some of the Fenian leaders who now began to be put upon their trials. They bore themselves with manliness and dignity. Some of them had been brave soldiers in the American Civil War, and were entitled to wear honourable marks of distinction. Many had given up a successful career or a prosperous calling in the United States to take part in what they were led to believe would be the great national uprising of the Irish people. They spoke up with courage in the dock, and declared their perfect readiness to die for what they held to be a sacred cause. They indulged in no bravado and uttered no word of repining. One of the leaders, Colonel Burke, who had served with distinction in the army of the Southern Confederation, was sentenced to death in May 1867. A great public meeting was held in St. James's Hall, London, to adopt a memorial praying that the sentence might not be carried out. Among those who addressed the meeting was Mr. Mill. It was almost altogether an English meeting. The hall was crowded with English working men. The Irish element had hardly any direct representation there. Yet there was absolute unanimity, there was intense enthusiasm, in favour of the mitigation of the sentence on Colonel Burke and his companions. The great hall rang with cheer after cheer as Mr. Mill, in a voice made stronger than its wont by the intensity of his emotions, pleaded for a policy of mercy. The voice of that great meeting was heard in the ministerial councils, and the sentence of death was not inflicted.

Not many months after this event the world was aroused to amazement by the news of the daring rescue of Fenian prisoners in Manchester. Two Fenian prisoners, named Kelly and Deasy, were being conveyed in the prison van from one

of the police courts to the borough gaol to await further examination. On the way the van was stopped by a number of armed Fenians, who broke it open. In the scuffle a policeman was killed. The rescue was accomplished; the prisoners were hurried away, and were never after seen by English officials. The principal rescuers were captured and put on their trial for the murder of the policeman. Five were found guilty: their names were Allen, Larkin, O'Brien, Condon or Shore, and Maguire. Allen was a young fellow—a mere lad under twenty. The defence was that the prisoners only meditated a rescue, and that the death of the policeman was but an accident. All the five were sentenced to death. Then followed an almost unprecedented occurrence. After the trial it was proved that one of the five, Maguire, never was near the spot on the day of the rescue; that he was a loyal private in the Marines, and no Fenian; that he never knew anything about the plot or heard of it until he was arrested. He received a pardon at once, that being the only way in which he could be extricated from the effect of the mistaken verdict.

One other of the five prisoners who were convicted together escaped the death-sentence. This was Condon or Shore, an American by citizenship if not by birth. He had undoubtedly been concerned in the attempt at rescue; but for some reason a distinction was made between him and the others. This act of mercy, in itself highly commendable, added to the bad effect produced in Ireland by the execution of the other three men; for it gave rise to the belief that Shore had been spared only because the protection of the American Government might have been invoked on his behalf. Many strenuous attempts were made to procure a commutation of the sentence in the cases of the other prisoners. Mr. Bright exerted himself with characteristic energy and humanity. Mr. Swinburne, the poet, made an appeal to the people of England in lines of great power and beauty on behalf of a policy of mercy to the prisoners. Lord Derby, who had then come to be at the head of the Government, refused to listen to any appeal. The remaining three, Allen, Larkin, and O'Brien, were executed.

The excitement caused by the attempt they had made and the penalty they paid had hardly died away when a crime of a peculiarly atrocious nature was committed in the name of Fenianism. On December 13 an attempt was made to blow up the House of Detention at Clerkenwell. Two Fenian

prisoners were in the Clerkenwell House of Detention, and some sympathisers outside had attempted to rescue them by placing a barrel of gunpowder close to the wall of the prison, and exploding the powder by means of a match and a fuse. About sixty yards of the prison wall were blown in, and numbers of small houses in the neighbourhood were shattered to pieces. Six persons were killed on the spot; about six more died from the effects of the injuries they received; some hundred and twenty persons were wounded. The clumsiness of the crime was only surpassed by its atrocity. Had the prisoners on whose behalf the attempt was made been near the wall at the time, they must have shared the fate of those who were victimised outside. Had they even been taking exercise in the yard, they would, in all probability, have been killed. They would have been taking exercise at the time had it not been for a warning the authorities at Scotland Yard received two days before, to the effect that an attempt at rescue was to be made by means of gunpowder and the blowing in of the wall. In consequence of this warning the governor of the prison had the prisoners confined to their cells that day; and thus, in all probability, they owed their lives to the disclosure of the secret plan which their officious and ill-omened admirers had in preparation for their rescue. It is difficult to understand why the prison authorities and the police, thus forewarned, did not keep a sufficient watch upon the line of prison wall to prevent the possibility of any such scheme being put into execution. Five men and a woman were put on trial for the crime. The proceedings against the woman and one of the men were withdrawn, three other prisoners were acquitted after a long trial; one man was convicted and executed.

It is not necessary to follow out the steps of the Fenian movement any further. There were many isolated attempts; there were many arrests, trials, imprisonments, banishments. The phenomena of the Fenian movement did not fail to impress some statesmanlike minds in England. There were some public men who saw that the time had come when mere repression must no longer be relied upon as a cure for Irish discontent. While many public instructors lost themselves in vain shriekings over the wickedness of Fenianism and the incurable perversity of the Irish people, one statesman was already convinced that the very shock of the Fenian agitation would arouse public attention to the recognition of substantial

grievance, and to the admission that the business of statesmanship was to seek out the remedy and provide redress.

English society was much distressed and disturbed about the same time by the stories of outrages more cruel, and of a conspiracy more odious and alarming in its purpose than any that could be ascribed to the Fenian movement. It began to be common talk that among the trades-associations there was systematic terrorising of the worst kind. Ordinary intimidation had long been regarded as one of the means by which some of the trades-unions kept their principles in force. Now, however, it was common report that secret assassination was in many cases the doom of those who brought on themselves the wrath of the Trades-unions. For many years the great town of Sheffield had had a special notoriety in consequence of the outrages of the kind that were believed to be committed there. When a workman had made himself obnoxious to the leaders of some local trades-union, it occasionally happened that some sudden and signal misfortune befell him. Perhaps his house was set on fire; perhaps a canister of gunpowder was exploded under his windows, or some rudely constructed infernal machine was flung into his bed-room at midnight. The man himself, supposing him to have escaped with his life, felt convinced that in the attempt to destroy him he saw the hand of the union; his neighbours were of his opinion; but it sometimes happened, nevertheless, that there was no possibility of bringing home the charge upon evidence that could satisfy a criminal court. The comparative impunity which such crimes were enabled to secure made the perpetrators of them feel more and more safe in their enterprises; and the result was that outrages began to increase in atrocity, boldness, and numbers. The employers offered large rewards for the discovery of the offenders; the Government did the same; but not much came of the offers. The employers charged the local trades-unions with being the authors of all the crimes; the officials of the unions distinctly and indignantly denied the charge. In some instances they did more. They offered on their own account a reward for the detection of the criminals, in order that their own innocence might thereby be established once for all in the face of day. At a public meeting held in Sheffield to express public opinion on the subject, the secretary of one of the local unions, a man named Broadhead, spoke out with indignant and vehement eloquence in denunciation of the crimes, and in protest against the insinua-

tion that they were sanctioned by the authority or done with the connivance of the trades-organisation.

Nevertheless the Government resolved to undertake a full investigation into the whole condition of the Trades-unions. A Commission was appointed, and a bill passed through Parliament enabling it to take evidence upon oath. The Commissioners sent down to Sheffield three examiners to make enquiry as to the outrages. The examiners had authority to offer protection to anyone, even though himself engaged in the commission of the outrages, who should give information which might lead to the discovery of the conspiracy. This offer had its full effect. The Government were now so evidently determined to get at the root of all the evil, that many of those actively engaged in the commission of the crimes took fright and believed they had best consult for their personal safety. Accordingly the Commission got as much evidence as could be desired, and it was soon put beyond dispute that more than one association had systematically employed the most atrocious means to punish offenders against their self-made laws and to deter men from venturing to act in opposition to them. The saw-grinders' union in Sheffield had been particularly active in such work, and the man named William Broadhead, who had so indignantly protested the innocence of his union, was the secretary of that organisation. Broadhead was proved to have ordered, arranged, and paid for the murder of at least one offender against his authority, and to have set on foot in the same way various deeds scarcely if at all less criminal. The crimes were paid for out of the funds of the union. There were gradations of outrage, ascending from what might be called mere personal annoyance up to the serious destruction of property, then to personal injury, to mutilation, and to death. Broadhead himself came before the examiners and acknowledged the part he had taken in the direction of such crimes. He explained how he had devised them, organised them, selected the agents by whom they were to be committed, and paid for them out of the funds of the union. The men whom he selected had sometimes no personal resentment against the victims they were bidden to mutilate or destroy. They were ordered and paid to punish men whom Broadhead considered to be offenders against the authority and the interests of the union, and they did the work obediently. In Manchester a state of things was found to exist only less hideous than that which prevailed in Sheffield. Other towns were found to be

not very far distant from Sheffield and Manchester in the audacity and ingenuity of their trade outrages.

The great majority, however, of the Trades-unions appeared after the most searching investigation to be absolutely free from any complicity in the crimes, or any sanction of them. Men of sense began to ask whether society had not itself to blame in some measure even for the crimes of the Trades-unions. The law had always dealt unfairly and harshly with the trade-associations. Public opinion had for a long time regarded them as absolutely lawless. There was a time when their very existence would have been an infraction of the law. For centuries our legislation had acted on the principle that the working-man was a serf of society, bound to work for the sake of the employer and on the employer's terms. Even down to the period of which we are now writing, there was still a marked and severe distinction drawn between master and servant, master and workman, in our legislation. In cases of breach of contract the remedy against the employer was entirely civil; against the employed, criminal. A workman might even be arrested on a warrant for alleged breach of contract and taken to prison before the case had been tried. The laws were particularly stringent in their declarations against all manner of combination among workmen. Any combined effort to raise wages would have been treated as conspiracy of a specially odious and dangerous order. Down to 1825 a mere combination of workmen for their own protection was unlawful; but long after 1825 the law continued to deal very harshly with what was called conspiracy among working-men for trade purposes. Not many years ago it was held that although a strike could not itself be pronounced illegal, yet a combination of workmen to bring about a strike was a conspiracy, and was to be properly punished by law. In 1867, the very year when the Commission we have described held its inquiries at Sheffield and Manchester, a decision given by the Court of Queen's Bench affirmed that a friendly society, which was also a trades-union, had no right to the protection of the law in enforcing a claim for a debt. It was laid down that because the rules of the society appeared to be such as would operate in restraint of trade, therefore the society was not entitled to the protection of the civil law in any ordinary matter of account. Trades-unions were not allowed to defend themselves against plunder by a dishonest member. This extraordinary principle was in force for several years after the

time at which we have now arrived in this history. One result of the investigations into the outrages in Sheffield and in Manchester was that public attention was drawn directly to the whole subject; the searching light of full free discussion was turned on to it, and after a while everyone began to see that the wanton injustice of the law and of society in dealing with the associations of working-men was responsible for many of the errors and even of the crimes into which some of the worst of these associations had allowed themselves to be seduced.

It was not, however, the law alone which had set itself for centuries against the working-man. Public opinion and legislation were in complete agreement as to the rights of Trades-unions. For many years the whole body of English public opinion outside the working-class itself was entirely against the principle of the unions. It was an axiom among all the employing and capitalist classes that trades-organisations were as much to be condemned in point of morality as they were absurd in the sight of political economy. All the leading newspapers were constantly writing against the Trades-unions at one time; not writing merely as a Liberal paper writes against some Tory measure, but as men condemn a monstrous heresy. Public opinion was equally well satisfied about strikes. Parliament, the pulpit, the press, the stage, philosophy, fiction, all were for a long time in combination to give forth one pronouncement on the subject. A strike was something always wicked and foolish; abstractly wicked; foolish to the fundamental depths of its theory. But the working-man had often no way of asserting his claims effectively except by the instrumentality of a strike. A court of law could do nothing for him. If he thought his wages ought to be raised, or ought not to be lowered, a court of law could not assist him. Once it would have compelled him to take what was offered, and work for it or go to prison. Now, in better times, it would offer him no protection against the most arbitrary conduct on the part of an employer.

In spite of law, in spite of public opinion, the trades-unions went on and prospered. Some of them grew to be great organisations, disposing of vast funds. Several fought out against employers long battles that were almost like a social civil war. Sometimes they were defeated; sometimes they were victorious; sometimes they got at least so far that each side could claim the victory, and wrangle once more historically over the point. Many individual societies were badly

managed and went to pieces. Some were made the victims of swindlers, just like other institutions among other classes. Some were brought into difficulties simply because of the childlike ignorance of the most elementary principles of political economy with which they were conducted. Still the Trades-union, taken as a whole, became stronger and stronger every day. It became part of the social life of the working-classes. At last it began to find public opinion giving way before it. Some eminent men, of whom Mr. Mill was the greatest, had long been endeavouring to get the world to recognise the fact that a strike is not a thing which can be called good or bad until we know its object and its history; that the men who strike may be sometimes right, and that they may have sometimes been successful. But as usual in this country, and as another evidence doubtless of what is commonly called the practical character of Englishmen, the right of the trades-unions to existence and to social recognition was chiefly impressed upon the public mind by the strength of the organisation itself. Many men came at once to the frankly admitted conclusion that there must be some principles, economic as well as others, to justify the existence and the growth of so remarkable an institution. The Sheffield outrages, even while they horrified everyone, yet made most persons begin to feel that the time had come when there must not be left in the mouth of the worst and most worthless member of a trades-union any excuse for saying any longer that the law was unjust to him and to his class. A course of legislation was then begun which was not made complete for several years after. We may, however, anticipate here the measures which passed in 1875, and show how at length the fair claims of the unions were recognised. The masters and workmen were placed on absolute equality as regarded the matter of contract. They had been thus equal for many years in other countries; in France, Germany, and Italy, for example. A breach of contract resulting in damages was to be treated on either side as giving rise to a civil and not a criminal remedy. There was to be no imprisonment, except as it is ordered in other cases, by a county court judge; that is, a man may be committed to prison who has been ordered to pay a certain sum, and out of contumacy will not pay it, although payment is shown to be within his power. No combination of persons is to be deemed criminal if the act proposed to be done would not be criminal when done by one

person. Several breaches of contract were, however, very properly made the subject of special legislation. If, for example, a man 'wilfully and maliciously' broke his contract of service to a gas or water company, knowing that by doing so he might cause great public injury, he might be imprisoned. It was made strictly unlawful and punishable by imprisonment to hide or injure the tools of workmen in order to prevent them from doing their work; or to 'beset' workmen in order to prevent them from getting to their place of business, or to intimidate them into keeping away from it. In principle this legislation accomplished all that any reasonable advocate of the claims of the trades-unions could have demanded. It put the masters and workmen on an equality. It recognised the right of combination for every purpose which is not itself actually contrary to law. It settled the fact that the right of a combination is just the same as the right of an individual.

The civil laws which dealt so harshly for a long time with Trades-unionism dealt unfairly too with the friendly societies, with that strong and sudden growth of our modern days—Co-operation. If working-men can combine effectively and in large numbers for a benefit society or for a strike, why should they not also co-operate for the purpose of supplying each other with good and cheap food and clothing, and dividing among themselves the profits which would otherwise be distributed among various manufacturers and shopkeepers? This is a question which had often been put before, without any very decided practical result coming of it; but in 1844, or thereabouts, it was put and tested in a highly practical manner in the North of England. The association called 'The Equitable Pioneers' Co-operative Store' was founded in Rochdale by a few poor flannel-weavers. The times were bad; there had been a failure of a savings-bank, involving heavy loss to many classes; and these men cast about in their minds for some way of making their little earnings go far. These Rochdale weavers were thoughtful men. Most of them were, or rather had been, followers of Robert Owen, a dreamy philanthropist and socialist, who had written books advocating a modified form of community of property, and who had tried the experiment of founding a communistic colony in America, which was entirely unsuccessful, and whose doctrines were followed by a large number of people, who called themselves Owenites, after him. One

decidedly good teaching which they had from Robert Owen was a dislike to the credit system. They saw that the shopkeeper who gave his goods at long credit must necessarily have to charge a much higher price than the actual value of the goods, and even of a reasonable profit, in order to make up for his having to live out of his money, and to secure himself against bad debts. They also saw that the credit system leads to almost incessant litigation; and besides that litigation means the waste of time and money; some of them, it appears, had a conscientious objection to the taking of an oath. It occurred to these Rochdale weavers, therefore, that if they could get together a little capital they might start a shop or store of their own, and thus be able to supply themselves with better goods, and at cheaper rates, than by dealing with the ordinary tradesmen. Twenty-eight of them began by subscribing twopence a week each. The number of subscribers was afterwards increased to forty, and the weekly subscription to threepence. When they had got 28*l.* they thought they had capital enough to begin their enterprise with. They took a small shop in a little back street, called Toad Lane, After the shop had been fitted up, the equitable pioneers had only 14*l.* left to stock it; and the concern looked so small and shabby that the hearts of some of the pioneers might have well-nigh sunk within them. A neighbouring shopkeeper, feeling utter contempt for the enterprise, declared that he could remove the whole stock-in-trade in a wheelbarrow. The wheelbarrow-load of goods soon, however, became too heavy to be carried away in the hold of a great steamer. The pioneers began by supplying each other with groceries; they went on to butchers' meat, and then to all sorts of clothing. From supplying goods they progressed on to the manufacturing of goods; they had a corn mill and a cotton mill, and they became to a certain extent a land and a building society. They set aside part of their profits for a library and reading-room, and they founded a co-operative Turkish bath. Their capital of 28*l.* swelled in sixteen years to over 120,000*l.* Cash payments and the division of profits were the main sources of this remarkable prosperity. Not merely did the shareholders share in the profits, but all the buyers received an equitable percentage on the price of every article they bought. Each purchaser, on paying for what he had bought, received a ticket which entitled him to that percentage at each division of profit, and thus many a poor man

found at the quarterly division that he had several shillings, perhaps a pound, coming to him, which seemed at first to have dropped out of the clouds, so little direct claim did he appear to have on it. He had not paid more for his goods than he would have had to pay at the cheapest shop; he had got them of the best quality the price could buy; and at the end of each period he found that he had a sum of money standing to his credit, which he could either take away or leave to accumulate at the store.

Many other institutions were soon following the example of the Rochdale pioneers. Long before their capital had swelled to the amount we have mentioned, the North of England was studded with co-operative associations of one kind or another, Many of them proved sad failures. Some started on chimerical principles; some were stupidly, some selfishly mismanaged. There came seasons of heavy strain on labour and trade, when the resources of many were taxed to their uttermost, and when some even of the best seemed for a moment likely to go under. The co-operative associations suffered in fact the trials and vicissitudes that must be met by all institutions of men. But the one result is clear and palpable; they have as a whole been a most remarkable success. Of late years the principle has been taken up by classes who would have appeared at one time to have little in common with the poor flannel-weavers of Rochdale. The civil servants of the Crown first adopted the idea; and now in some of the most fashionable quarters of London the carriages of some of their most fashionable residents are seen at the crowded doors of the co-operative store. It may safely be predicted that posterity will not let the co-operative principle die. It has taken firm hold of our modern society. It seems certainly destined to develop rather than fade; to absorb rather than be absorbed. The law was much against the principle in the beginning. Before 1852 all co-operative associations had to come under the Friendly Societies Act, which prohibited their dealing with any but their own members. An Act obtained in 1852 allowed them to sell to persons not members of their body. For many years they were not permitted to hold more than an acre of land. More lately this absurd restriction was abolished, and they were allowed to trade in land, to hold land to any extent, and to act as building societies. The friendly societies, which were in their origin merely working-men's clubs, have been the subject of legislation since the

later years of the last century. It may be doubted whether, even up to this day, that legislation has not done them more harm than good. The law neither takes them fairly under its protection and control, nor leaves them to do the best they can for themselves uncontrolled and on their own responsibility. At one time the sort of left-handed recognition which the law gave them had a direct tendency to do harm. An officer was appointed by the Government, who might inspect the manner in which the accounts of the societies were kept, and certify that they were in conformity with the law; but he had no authority to look actually into the affairs of a society. The mere, fact, however, that there was any manner of Government certificate proved sadly misleading to thousands of persons. Some actually regarded the certificate as a guarantee given by the Government that their money was safe; a guarantee which bound the State to make good any loss to the depositors. Others, who were not quite so credulous, were convinced at least that the certificate testified on Government authority that the funds of the society were safe, and that its accounts and its business were managed on principles of strict economical soundness. The Government official certified nothing of the kind. The certificate given to the friendly societies merely certified that on the face of things the accounts seemed all right. Many of the societies were sadly mismanaged; in certain of them there was the grossest malversation of funds; in some towns much distress was caused among the depositors in consequence. The societies had to pass, in fact, through a stage of confusion, ignorance, and experiment, and it is perhaps only to be wondered at that there was not greater mismanagement, greater blundering, and more lamentable failure.

In the summer of 1867 England received with strange welcome a strange visitor. It was the Sultan of Turkey who came to visit England—the Sultan Abdul-Aziz, whose career was to end ten years after in dethronement and suicide. Abdul-Aziz was the first Sultan who ever set his foot on English soil. He was welcomed with a show of enthusiasm which made cool observers wonder and shrug their shoulders. There was an insurrection going on in the Greek island of Crete, which was under Turkish rule, and the Sultan's generals were doing cruel work among the unfortunate rebels of that Greek race with which the people of England had so long and so loudly professed the deepest sympathy. Yet the

Sultan was received by Englishmen with what must have seemed to him a genuine outburst of national enthusiasm. As a matter of course he received the usual court entertainments; but he was also entertained gorgeously by the Lord Mayor and Corporation of London; he went in state to the Opera and the Crystal Palace; he saw a review of the fleet, in company with the Queen, at Spithead; he was run after and shouted for by vast crowds wherever he showed his dark and melancholy face, on which even then the sullen shadow of the future might seem to have been cast. His presence threw completely into the background that of his nominal vassal the Viceroy of Egypt, who might otherwise have been a very sufficient lion in himself. Abdul-Aziz doubtless believed in the genuineness of the reception, and thought it denoted a real and lasting sympathy with him and his State. He did not know how easily crowds are gathered and the fire of popular enthusiasm is lighted in London. The Shah of Persia was to experience the same sort of reception not long after; Garibaldi had enjoyed it not long before; Kossuth had had it in his time. Some of the newspapers politely professed to believe that the visit would be productive of wonderful results to Turkey. The Sultan, it was suggested, would surely return to Constantinople with his head full of new ideas gathered up in the West. He would go back much impressed by the evidences of the blessings of our constitutional government, and the progressive nature of our civic institutions. He would read a lesson in the glass and iron of the Crystal Palace, the solid splendours of the Guildhall. He would learn something from the directors of the railway companies, and something from the Lord Mayor. The Cattle Show at the Agricultural Hall could not be lost on his observant eyes. The result would be a new era for Turkey—another new era: the real new era this time. The poor Sultan's head must have been sadly bemused by all the various sights he was forced to see. He left England just before the public had had time to get tired of him; and the new era did not appear to be any nearer for Turkey after his return home.

Mr. Disraeli astonished and amused the public towards the close of 1867 by a declaration he made at a dinner which was given in his honour at Edinburgh. The company were surprised to learn that he had for many years been a thorough reformer and an advocate of popular suffrage, and that he had only kept his convictions to himself because it was necessary

to instil them gently into the minds of his political colleagues. 'I had,' he said, 'to prepare the mind of the country, and to educate—if it be not arrogant to use such a phrase—to educate our party. It is a large party, and requires its attention to be called to questions of this kind with some pressure. I had to prepare the mind of Parliament and the country on this question of Reform.' All the time, therefore, that Mr. Disraeli was fighting against Reform Bills, he was really trying to lead his party towards the principles of popular reform. Some members of the party which Mr. Disraeli professed to have cleverly educated were a little scandalised and even shocked at the frank composure of his confession; some were offended; it seemed to them that their ingenious instructor had made fools of them. But the general public, as usual, persisted in refusing to take Mr. Disraeli seriously, or to fasten on him any moral responsibility for anything he might say or do. That was his way; if he were anything but that, he would not be Mr. Disraeli; he would not be leader of the House of Commons; he would not be Prime Minister of England.

For to that it soon came; came at last. Only the opportunity was lately needed to make him Prime Minister; and that opportunity came early in 1868. Lord Derby's health had for some time been so weakly that he was anxious to get rid of the trouble of office as soon as possible. In February 1868 he became so ill that his condition excited the gravest anxiety. He rallied indeed and grew much better; but he took the warning and determined on retiring from office. He tendered his resignation, and it was accepted by the Queen. It fell to the lot of his son, Lord Stanley, to make the announcement in the House of Commons. There was a general regret felt for the retirement of Lord Derby from a leading place in politics; but as soon as it appeared that his physical condition was not actually hopeless, men's minds turned at once from him to his successor. No one could now doubt that Mr. Disraeli's time had come. The patient career, the thirty years' war against difficulties, were to have the long-desired reward. The Queen sent for Mr. Disraeli, and invited him to assume Lord Derby's vacated place and to form a Government. By a curious coincidence the autograph letter containing this invitation was brought from Osborne to the new Prime Minister by General Grey, the man who defeated Mr. Disraeli in his first endeavour to enter the House of

Commons. That was the contest for Wycombe in June 1832. It was a memorable contest in many ways. It was the last election under the political conditions which the Reform Bill brought to a close. The Reform Bill had only just been passed when the Wycombe election took place, and had not come into actual operation. The state of the poll is amusing to read of now. Thirty-five voters all told registered their suffrages. Twenty-three voted for Colonel Grey, as he then was; twelve were induced to support Mr. Disraeli. Then Mr. Disraeli retired from the contest, and Colonel Grey was proclaimed the representative of Wycombe by a majority of eleven. Nor had Wycombe exhausted in the contest all its electoral strength. There were, it seemed, two voters more in the borough who would have polled, if it were necessary, on the side of Colonel Grey. Mr. Disraeli's successful rival in that first struggle for a seat in Parliament was now the bearer of the Queen's invitation to Mr. Disraeli to become Prime Minister of England. The public in general were well pleased that Mr. Disraeli should reach the object of his ambition. It seemed only the fit return for his long and hard struggle against so many adverse conditions. He had battled with his evil stars; and his triumph over them pleased most of those who had observed the contest.

The new Premier made few changes in his Cabinet. His former lieutenant, Lord Cairns, had been for some time one of the Lords Justices of the Court of Chancery. Mr. Disraeli made him Lord Chancellor. In order to do this he had to undertake the somewhat ungracious task of informing Lord Chelmsford, who sat on the woolsack during Lord Derby's tenure of office, that his services would no longer be required. Lord Chelmsford's friends were very angry, and a painful controversy began in the newspapers. It was plainly stated by some of the aggrieved that Lord Chelmsford had been put aside because he had shown himself too firmly independent in his selection of judges. But there seems no reason to ascribe Mr. Disraeli's action to any other than its obvious and reasonable motive. His Ministry was singularly weak in debating talent in the House of Lords. Lord Cairns was one of the best parliamentary debaters of the day; Lord Chelmsford was hardly entitled to be called a Parliamentary debater at all. Lord Cairns was a really great lawyer; Lord Chelmsford was only a lawyer of respectable capacity. Lord Chelmsford was at that time nearly seventy-five years old, and Lord

Cairns was a quarter of a century younger. It was surely not necessary to search for ungenerous or improper motives to explain the act of the new Prime Minister in preferring the one man to the other. Mr. Disraeli merely did his duty. Nothing could justify a Minister who had the opportunity and the responsibility of such a choice in deciding to retain Lord Chelmsford rather than to bring in Lord Cairns.

No other change was important. Mr. Ward Hunt, a respectable country gentleman of no great position and of moderate abilities, became Chancellor of the Exchequer in the room of Mr. Disraeli. Mr. Walpole, who had been in the Cabinet for some time without office, retired from the Administration altogether. A good deal of work was got through in the session. A bill was introduced to put a stop to the system of public executions, and passed with little difficulty. The only objection raised was urged by those who thought the time had come for abolishing the system of capital punishment altogether. Public executions had long grown to be a scandal to the country. Every voice had been crying out against them. A public execution in London was a scene to fill an observer with something like a loathing for the whole human race. Through all the long night before the execution the precincts of the prison became a bivouac ground for the ruffianism of the metropolis. The roughs, the professional robbers, and the prospective murderers held high festival there. The air reeked with the smell of strong drink, with noise and oaths and blasphemy. The soul took its flight as if it were a trapeze-performer in a circus. The moral effect of the scene as an example to evil-doers was about as great as the moral effect of a cock-fight. The demoralising effect, however, was broad and deep. It may be doubted whether one in ten thousand of those who for mere curiosity came to see an execution did not go away a worse creature than he had come. Since the change made in 1868 the execution takes place within the precincts of the gaol; it is witnessed by a few selected persons, usually including representatives of the press, and it is certified by the verdict of a coroner's jury.

Another change of ancient system was made by the measure which took away from the House of Commons the power of deciding election petitions. The long-established custom was, that an election petition was referred to a Committee of the House of Commons, who heard the evidence on both sides, and then decided by a majority of votes as to the right of the

person elected to hold the seat. The system was open to some obvious objections. The one great and crying evil of our electioneering was then the bribery and corruption which attended it. A Parliamentary Committee could hardly be expected to deal very stringently with bribery, seeing that most of the members of the Committee were sure to have carried on or authorised bribery on their own account. A false public conscience had grown up with regard to bribery. Few men held it really in hatred. The country gentleman whose own vote, when once he had been elected, was unpurchasable by any money bribe, thought it quite a natural and legitimate thing that he should buy his seat by corrupting voters. Then again, the decision of a Parliamentary Committee was very often determined by the political opinions of the majority of its members. Acute persons used to say, that when once the Committee had been formed they could tell what its decision would be. 'Show me the men and I'll show you the decision' was the principle. It was not always found to be so in practice. A Committee with a Conservative majority did sometimes decide against a Conservative candidate. A Committee with a majority of Whigs has been known to unseat a Whig occupant. But in general the decision of the Committee was either influenced by the political opinions of its majority, or, what was nearly as bad so far as public opinion was concerned, it was believed to be so influenced. There had therefore been for a long time an opinion growing up that something must be done to bring about a reform, and in 1867 a Parliamentary Select Committee reported in favour of abandoning altogether the system of referring election petitions to a tribunal composed of members of the House of Commons. The proposal of this Committee was, that every petition should be referred to one of the Judges of the superior courts at Westminster, with power to decide both law and fact, and to report not only as to the seat but as to the extent of bribery and corruption in the constituency. The Judges themselves strongly objected to having such duties imposed upon them. The Lord Chief Justice stated on their behalf that he had consulted with them, and was charged by them one and all to convey to the Lord Chancellor 'their strong and unanimous feeling of insuperable objection to undertaking functions the effect of which would be to lower and degrade the judicial office, and to destroy, or at all events materially impair, the confidence of the public in

the thorough impartiality and inflexible integrity of the Judges, when in the course of their ordinary duties political matters come incidentally before them.'

Notwithstanding the objections of the Judges, however, the Government, after having made one or two unsuccessful experiments at a measure to institute a new court for the trial of election petitions, brought in a bill to refer such petitions to a single Judge, selected from a list to be made by arrangement among the Judges of the three superior courts. This bill, which was to be in operation for three years as an experiment, was carried without much difficulty. It has been renewed since that time, and slightly altered. The principle of referring election petitions to the decision of a legal tribunal remains in force, and it is very unlikely indeed that the House of Commons will ever recover its ancient privilege. Many members of that House still regret the change. They say, and not unreasonably, that with time and the purifying effect of public opinion the objections to the old system would have died away. A Committee of the House of Commons would have come to regard bribery as all honest and decent men must in time regard it. They would acknowledge it a crime and brand it accordingly. So too it is surely probable that members of the House of Commons sitting to hear an election petition would have got over that low condition of political morals which allowed them to give, or be suspected of giving, their decision for partisan purposes without regard to facts and to justice. It is right to say that none of the effects anticipated by the Chief Justice were felt in England. The impartiality of the Judges was never called in question. In Ireland it was otherwise, at least in some instances. Judges are rarely appointed in Ireland who have not held law office; and law office is usually obtained by Parliamentary, in other words, by partisan service. There is not, therefore, always the same confidence in the impartiality of the Judges in Ireland that prevails in England, and it must be owned that in one or two instances at least, the effect of referring an election petition to the decision of an Irish Judge was not by any means favourable to the public faith either in the dignity or impartiality of the Bench. Of late years some really stringent measures have been taken against bribery. Several boroughs have been disfranchised altogether because of the gross and seemingly ineradicable corruption that prevailed there. Time, education, and public opinion will probably before long cleanse our political system

of the stain of bribery. Before long surely it will be accounted as base to give as to take a bribe.

The House of Lords too abandoned about this time one of their ancient usages—the custom of voting by proxy. A Select Committee of the Peers had recommended that the practice should be discontinued. It was defended of course, as every antiquated and anomalous practice is sure to be defended. It was urged, for example, that no men can be better qualified to understand the great political questions of the day than members of the House of Peers who are employed in the diplomatic service abroad, and that it is unfair to exclude these men from affirming their opinion by a vote, even though they cannot quit their posts and return home to give the vote in person. This small grievance, if it were one, was very properly held to be of little account when compared with the obvious objections to the practice. The House of Lords, however, were not willing absolutely and for ever to give up the privilege. They only passed a standing order 'that the practice of calling for proxies on a division be discontinued, and that two days' notice be given of any motion for the suspension of the order.' It is not likely that any attempt will be made to suspend the order and renew the obsolete practice.

The Government ventured this year on the bold but judicious step of acquiring possession of all the lines of telegraph, and making the control of communication by wire a part of the business of the Post Office. They did not succeed in making a very good bargain of it, and for a time the new management resulted in the most distracting confusion. But the country highly approved of the purchase. The Post Office has long been one of the best managed departments of the Civil Service.

An important event in the year's history was the successful conclusion of the expedition into Abyssinia. A vague mysterious interest hung around Abyssinia. It is a land which claims to have held the primitive Christians, and to have the bones of St. Mark among its treasury of sacred relics. It held fast to the Christian faith, according to its own views of that faith, when Egypt flung it aside after the Arab invasion. The Abyssinians trace the origin of their empire back to the time of Solomon when the Queen of Sheba visited him. The Emperor or King of Abyssinia was the Prester John, the mysterious king-priest of the middle ages. If Sir

John Mandeville may be accepted as any authority, that traveller avers that the title of Prester John rose from the fact that one of the early kings of Abyssinia went with a Christian knight into a Christian church in Egypt and was so charmed with the service that he vowed he would thenceforth take the title of priest. He further declared, that 'he wolde have the name of the first preest that wente out of the Chirche; and his name was John.' The controversy over Bruce's travels in Abyssinia excited in 1790 a curiosity as to the land of Prester John, which was revived in 1865 by the fact that a number of British subjects, men and women, were held in captivity by Theodore, King of Abyssinia. Among the captives in Theodore's hands were Captain Cameron, her Majesty's Consul at Massowah, with his secretary and some servants; Mr. Hormuzd Rassam, a Syrian Christian and naturalised subject of the Queen; Lieutenant Prideaux, and Dr. Blanc. These men were made prisoners while actually engaged on official business of the English Government, and the expedition was therefore formally charged to recover them. But there were several other captives as well, whom the Commander-in-Chief was enjoined to take under his protection. There were German missionaries and their wives and children, some of the women being English; some teachers, artists, and workmen, all European. The quarrel which led to the imprisonment of these people was of old standing. Some of the missionaries had been four years in duress before the expedition was sent out to their rescue. In April 1865, Lord Chelmsford had called the attention of the House of Lords to the treatment which certain British subjects were then receiving at the hands of Theodore, the Negus or supreme ruler of Abyssinia. Theodore was a usurper. Few Eastern sovereigns who have in any way made their mark on history, from Haroun-al-Raschid and Saladin downwards, can be described by any other name than that of usurper. Theodore seems to have been a man of strong barbaric nature, a compound of savage virtue and more than savage ambition and cruelty. He was open to passionate and lasting friendships; his nature was swept by stormy gusts of anger and hatred. His moods of fury and of mildness came and went like the thunderstorms and calms of a tropic region. He had had a devoted friendship for Mr. Plowden, a former English Consul at Massowah, who had actually lent Theodore his help in putting down a rebellion, and was killed by the rebels in

consequence. When Theodore had crushed the rebellion, he slaughtered more than a hundred of the rebel prisoners as a sacrifice to the memory of his English friend. Captain Cameron was sent to succeed Mr. Plowden. It should be stated that neither Mr. Plowden nor Captain Cameron was appointed Consul for any part of Abyssinia. Massowah is an island off the African shore of the Red Sea. It is in Turkish ownership and forms no part of Abyssinia, although it is the principal starting point to the interior of that country from Egypt, and the great outlet for Abyssinian trade. Consuls were sent to Massowah, according to the terms of Mr. Plowden's appointment in 1848, 'for the protection of British trade with Abyssinia and with the countries adjacent thereto.' Mr. Plowden, however, had made himself an active ally of King Theodore, a course of proceeding which naturally gave great dissatisfaction to the English Government. Captain Cameron, therefore, received positive instructions to take no part in the quarrels of Theodore and his subjects, and was reminded by Lord John Russell that he held 'no representative character in Abyssinia.' It probably seemed to Theodore that the attitude of England was altered and unfriendly, and thus the dispute began which led to the seizure of the missionaries. Captain Cameron seems to have been much wanting in discretion, and Theodore suspected him of intriguing with Egypt. Theodore wrote a letter to Queen Victoria requesting help against the Turks, and for some reason the letter remained unanswered. A story went that Theodore cherished a strong ambition to become the husband of the Queen of England, and even represented that his descent from the Queen of Sheba made him not unworthy of such an alliance. Whether he ever put his proposals into formal shape or not, it is certain that misunderstandings arose; that Theodore fancied himself slighted; and that he wreaked his wrongs by seizing all the British subjects within his reach, and throwing them into captivity. They were put in chains, and kept in Magdala, his rock-based capital. Consul Cameron was among the number. He had imprudently gone back into Abyssinia from Massowah, and was at once pounced upon by the furious descendant of Prester John.

The English Government had a difficult task before them. It seemed not unlikely that the first movement made by an invading expedition might be the signal for the massacre of the prisoners. The effect of conciliation was therefore tried

in the first instance. Mr. Rassam, who held the office of Assistant British Resident at Aden, a man who had acquired some distinction under Mr. Layard in exploring the remains of Nineveh and Babylon, was sent on a mission to Theodore with a message from Queen Victoria. Lieutenant Prideaux and Dr. Blanc were appointed to accompany him. Theodore played with Mr. Rassam for a while, and then added him and his companions to the number of the captives. Theodore seems to have become more and more possessed with the idea that the English Government were slighting him; and one or two unlucky mishaps or misconceptions gave him some excuse for cherishing the suspicion in his jealous and angry mind. At last an ultimatum was sent by Lord Stanley, demanding the release of the captives within three months on penalty of war. This letter does not seem to have ever reached the King's hands. The Government made preparations for war, and appointed Sir Robert Napier, now Lord Napier of Magdala, then Commander-in-Chief of the army of Bombay, to conduct the expedition. A winter sitting of Parliament was held in November 1867, supplies were voted, and the expeditionary force set out from Bombay.

The expedition was well managed. Its work was, if we may use a somewhat homely expression, done to time. The military difficulties were not great, but the march had to be made across some four hundred miles of a mountainous and roadless country. The army had to make its way, now under burning sun, and now amidst storms of rain and sleet, through broken and perplexing mountain gorges and over mountain heights ten thousand feet above the sea level. Anything like a skilful resistance, even such resistance as savages might well have been expected to make, would have placed the lives of all the force in the utmost danger. The mere work of carrying the supplies safely along through such a country was of itself enough to keep the energies of the invading army on the utmost strain. Meanwhile the captives were dragging out life in the very bitterness of death. The King still oscillated between caprices of kindness and impulses of cruelty. He sometimes strolled in upon the prisoners in careless undress; perhaps in European shirt and trousers, without a coat; and he cheerily brought with him a bottle of wine, which he insisted on the captives sharing with him. At other times he visited them in the mood of one who loved to feast his eyes on the anticipatory terrors of the victims he has

determined to destroy. He had still great faith in the fighting power of his Abyssinians. Sometimes he was in high spirits, and declared that he longed for an encounter with the invaders. At other moments, however, and when the steady certain march of the English soldiers was bringing them nearer and nearer, he seems to have lost heart and become impressed with a boding conviction that nothing would ever go well with him again. One account describes him as he looked into the gathering clouds of an evening sky and drew melancholy auguries of his own fate. Sir Robert Napier arrived in front of Magdala in the beginning of April 1868. One battle was fought on the tenth of the month. Perhaps it ought not to be called a battle. It is better to say that the Abyssinians made such an attack on the English troops as a bull sometimes makes on a railway train in full motion. The Abyssinians attacked with wild courage and spirit. The English weapons and the English discipline simply swept the assailants away. Others came on; wild charges were made again and again; five hundred Abyssinians were killed, and three times as many wounded. Not one of the English force was killed, and only nineteen men were wounded.

Then Theodore tried to come to terms. He sent back all the prisoners, who at last found themselves safe and free under the protection of the English flag. But Theodore would not surrender. Sir Robert Napier had therefore no alternative but to order an assault on his stronghold. Magdala was perched upon cliffs so high and steep, that it was said a cat could not climb them except at two points—one north and one south—at each of which a narrow path led up to a strong gateway. The attack was made by the northern path, and despite all the difficulties of the ascent, the attacking party reached the gate, forced it, and captured Magdala. Those who first entered found Theodore's dead body inside the gate. Defeated and despairing he had died in the high Roman fashion: by his own hand.

The rock-fortress of King Theodore was destroyed by the conqueror. Sir Robert Napier was unwilling to leave the place in its strength, because he had little doubt that if he did so it would be seized upon by a fierce Mohammedan tribe, the bitter enemies of the Abyssinian Christians. He therefore dismantled and destroyed the place. 'Nothing,' to use his own language, 'but blackened rock remains' of what was Magdala. The expedition returned to the coast almost imme-

diately. In less than a week after the capture of Magdala it was on its march to the sea. On June 21 the troopship *Crocodile* arrived at Plymouth with the first detachment of troops from Abyssinia. Nothing could have been more effectively planned, conducted, and timed than the whole expedition. It went and came to the precise moment appointed for every movement, like an express train. That was its great merit. Warlike difficulties it had none to encounter. No one can doubt that such difficulties too, had they presented themselves, would have been encountered with success. The struggle was against two tough enemies, climate and mountain; and Sir Robert Napier won. He was made Baron Napier of Magdala, and received a pension. The thanks of both Houses of Parliament were voted to the army of Abyssinia and its commander.

The widow of King Theodore died in the English camp before the return of the expedition. Theodore's son, Alamayou, aged seven years, was taken charge of by Queen Victoria, and for a while educated in India. The boy was afterwards brought to England; but he never reached maturity. All the care that could be taken of him here did not keep him from withering and dying under the influence of an uncongenial civilisation. No attempt was made to interfere with the internal affairs of Abyssinia. Having destroyed their monarchy, the invaders left the Abyssinians to do as they would for the establishment of another. Sir Robert Napier declared one of the chiefs a friend of the British, and this chief had some hopes of obtaining the sovereignty of the country. But his rank as a friend of the British did not prevent him from being defeated in a struggle with a rival, and this latter not long after succeeded in having himself crowned king under the title of John the Second. Another Prester John was set up in Abyssinia.

CHAPTER XXIII.

IRISH QUESTIONS.

'THE Irish Peasant to his Mistress' is the name of one of Moore's finest songs. The Irish peasant tells his mistress of his undying fidelity to her. 'Through grief and through danger' her smile has cheered his way. 'The darker our fortunes the purer thy bright love burned'; it turned shame into

glory; fear into zeal. Slave as he was, with her to guide him he felt free. She had a rival; and the rival was honoured, 'while thou wert mocked and scorned.' The rival wore a crown of gold; the other's brows were girt with thorns. The rival wooed him to temples, while the loved one lay hid in caves. 'Her friends were all masters, while thine, alas, are slaves!' 'Yet,' he declares, 'cold in the earth at thy feet I would rather be than wed one I love not, or turn one thought from thee.'

The Irish peasant's mistress is the Catholic Church. The rival was the State Church set up by English authority. The Irish peasant remained through centuries of persecution devotedly faithful to the Catholic Church. Nothing could win or wean him from it. The Irish population of Ireland—there is meaning in the words—were made apparently by nature for the Catholic faith. Half the thoughts, half the life of the Irish peasant, belong to a world other than the material world around him. The supernatural becomes almost the natural for him. The streams, the valleys, the hills of his native country are peopled by mystic forms and melancholy legends, which are all but living things for him. Even the railway has not banished from the land his familiar fancies and dreams. The 'good people' still linger around the raths and glens. The banshee even yet laments, in dirge-like wailings, the death of the representative of each ancient house. The very superstitions of the Irish peasant take a devotional form. They are never degrading. His piety is not merely sincere: it is even practical. It sustains him against many hard trials, and enables him to bear, in cheerful patience, a lifelong trouble. He praises God for everything; not as an act of mere devotional formality, but as by instinct; the praise naturally rising to his lips. Old men and women in Ireland who seem, to the observer, to have lived lives of nothing but privation and suffering, are heard to murmur with their latest breath the fervent declaration that the Lord was good to them always. Assuredly this genuine piety does not always prevent the wild Celtic nature from breaking forth into fierce excesses. Stormy outbursts of passion, gusts of savage revenge, too often sweep away the soul of the Irish peasant from the quiet moorings in which his natural piety and the teachings of his Church would hold it. But deep down in his nature is that faith in the other world and its visible connection and intercourse with this; his reverence for the teaching which shows

him a clear title to immortality. For this very reason, when the Irish peasant throws off altogether the guidance of religion, he is apt to rush into worse extravagances and excesses than most other men. He is not made to be a rationalist; he is made to be a believer.

The Irishman was bound by ties of indescribable strength and complication to his own Church. The State Church set up in Ireland was to him a symbol of oppression. There was not one rational word to be said on principle for the maintenance of such an institution. Every argument in favour of the State Church in England was an argument against the State Church in Ireland. The English Church, as an institution, is defended on the ground that it represents the religious convictions of the great majority of the English people, and that it is qualified to take welcome charge of those who would otherwise be left without any religious care or teaching in England. The Catholics in Ireland were, to all other denominations together, as five to one; the State Church represented only a small proportion of a very small minority. In many places the Protestant clergyman preached to a dozen listeners; in some places he thought himself lucky when he could get half a dozen. There were many places with a Protestant clergyman and Protestant church and absolutely no Protestant worshippers. There had not of late years been much positive hostility to the State Church among the Irish people. So long as the clergyman was content to live quietly and mind his own flock, where he had any to mind, his Catholic neighbours were not disposed to trouble themselves much about him. If he was a sensible man he was usually content to minister to his own people and meddle no further with others. In the large towns he generally had his considerable congregation, and was busy enough. In some of the country places of the south and west he preached every Sunday to his little flock of five or six, while the congregation of the Catholic chapel a short distance off were covering great part of the hillside around the chapel door, because their numbers were many times too great to allow them to find room within the building itself. In days nearer to our own the miserable hovel had for the most part given place to a large and handsome church; in many places to a vast and stately cathedral. Nothing could be more remarkable than the manner in which the voluntary offerings of the Irish Catholics covered the face of the country with churches dedi-

cated to the uses of their faith. Often contributions came in liberal measure from Irishmen settled in far-off countries who were not likely ever again to see their native fields. Irish Catholic priests crossed the Atlantic, crossed even the Pacific, to ask for help to maintain their churches; and there came from Quebec and Ontario, from New York, New Orleans and Chicago, from Melbourne and Sydney, from Tasmania and New Zealand, the money which put up churches and spires on the Irish mountain-sides. The proportion between the Protestants and the Catholics began to tell more and more disadvantageously for the State Church as years went on. Of late the influx of the Catholic working population into the northern province threatens to overthrow the supremacy of Protestantism in Protestantism's own stronghold.

On March 16, 1868, a remarkable debate took place in the House of Commons. It had for its subject the condition of Ireland, and it was introduced by a series of resolutions which Mr. John Francis Maguire, an Irish member, proposed. Mr. Maguire was a man of high character and great ability and earnestness. He was a newspaper proprietor and an author; he knew Ireland well, but he also knew England and the temper of the English people. He was ardent in his national sympathies; but he was opposed to any movements of a seditious or a violent character. He had more than once risked his popularity among his countrymen by the resolute stand which he made against any agitation that tended towards rebellion. Mr. Maguire always held that the geographical situation of England and Ireland rendered a separation of the two countries impossible. But he accepted cordially the saying of Grattan, that if the ocean forbade separation, the sea denied union. He was in favour of a domestic legislature for Ireland, and he was convinced that such a measure would be found the means of establishing a true and genial union of feeling, a friendly partnership between the two countries. Mr. Maguire was looked on with respect and confidence by all parties in England as well as in his own country. Even the Fenians, whose schemes he condemned as he had condemned the Young Ireland movement of 1848, were willing to admit his honesty and his courage, for they found that there was no stauncher advocate in Parliament for a generous dealing with the Fenian prisoners. A speaker of remarkable power and earnestness, he was always listened to with attention in the House of Commons. It was well known that he had declined tenders

of office from both of the great English parties; and it was known too that he had done this at a time when his personal interests made his refusal a considerable sacrifice. When therefore he invited the attention of the House of Commons to the condition of Ireland, the House knew that it was likely to have a fair and a trustworthy exposition of the subject.

In the course of his speech Mr. Maguire laid great stress upon the evil effect wrought upon Ireland by the existence of the Irish Church. During the debate Lord Mayo, then Irish Secretary, made a speech in which he threw out some hint about a policy of equalising all religious denominations in Ireland without sacrificing the Irish Church. It has never since been known for certain whether he was giving a hint of a scheme actually in the mind of the Government; whether he was speaking as one set up to feel his way into the opinion of the House of Commons and the public; or whether he was only following out some sudden and irresponsible speculations of his own. The words, however, produced a great effect on the House of Commons. It became evident at once that the question of the Irish Church was making itself at last a subject for the practical politician. Mr. Bright, in the course of the debate, strongly denounced the Irish Establishment, and enjoined the Government and all the great English parties to rise to the occasion, and resolve to deal in some serious way with the condition of Ireland. Difficulties of the gravest nature he fully admitted were yet in the way, but he reminded the House, in tones of solemn and penetrating earnestness, that 'to the upright there ariseth light in the darkness.' But it was on the fourth night of the debate that the importance of the occasion became fully manifest. Then it was that Mr. Gladstone spoke, and declared that in his opinion the time had come when the Irish Church as a State institution must cease to exist. Then every man in the House knew that the end was near. Mr. Maguire withdrew his resolutions. The cause he had to serve was now in the hands of one who, though not surely more earnest for its success, had incomparably greater power to serve it. There was probably not a single Englishman capable of forming an opinion who did not know that from the moment when Mr. Gladstone made his declaration, the fall of the Irish State Church had become merely a question of time. Men only waited to see how Mr. Gladstone would proceed to procure its fall.

Public expectation was not long kept in suspense. A few

days after the debate on Mr. Maguire's motion, Mr. Gladstone gave notice of three resolutions on the subject of the Irish State Church. The first declared that in the opinion of the House of Commons it was necessary that the Established Church of Ireland should cease to exist as an Establishment, due regard being had to all personal interests and to all individual rights of property. The second resolution pronounced it expedient to prevent the creation of new personal interests by the exercise of any public patronage; and the third asked for an address to the Queen, praying that her Majesty would place at the disposal of Parliament her interest in the temporalities of the Irish Church. The object of these resolutions was simply to prepare for the actual disestablishment of the Church, by providing that no further appointments should be made, and that the action of patronage should be stayed, until Parliament should decide the fate of the whole institution. On March 30, 1868, Mr. Gladstone proposed his resolutions. Not many persons could have had much doubt as to the result of the debate. But if there were any such, their doubts must have begun to vanish when they read the notice of amendment to the resolutions which was given by Lord Stanley. The amendment proclaimed even more surely than the resolutions the impending fall of the Irish Church. Lord Stanley must have been supposed to speak in the name of the Government and the Conservative party; and his amendment merely declared that the House, while admitting that considerable modifications in the temporalities of the Church in Ireland might appear to be expedient, was of opinion 'that any proposition tending to the disestablishment or disendowment of that Church ought to be reserved for the decision of the new Parliament.' Lord Stanley's amendment asked only for delay. It did not plead that to-morrow would be sudden; it only asked that the stroke of doom should not be allowed to fall on the Irish Church to-day.

The debate was one of great power and interest. Some of the speakers were heard at their very best Mr. Bright made a speech which was well worthy of the occasion and the orator. Mr. Gathorne Hardy was in his very element. He flung aside all consideration of amendment, compromise, or delay, and went in for a vehement defence of the Irish Church. Mr. Hardy was not a debater of keen logical power nor an orator of genuine inspiration, but he always could rattle a defiant drum with excellent effect. He beat the war-drum

this time with tremendous energy. On the other hand, Mr. Lowe threw an intensity of bitterness remarkable even for him into the unsparing logic with which he assailed the Irish Church. That Church, he said, was 'like an exotic brought from a far country, tended with infinite pains and useless trouble. It is kept alive with the greatest difficulty and at great expense in an ungenial climate and an ungrateful soil. The curse of barrenness is upon it. It has no leaves, puts forth no blossom, and yields no fruit. Cut it down; why cumbereth it the ground?' Not the least remarkable speech of the debate was that made by Lord Cranborne, who denounced the Government of which he was not long since a member with an energy of hatred almost like ferocity. He accused his late colleagues of having in every possible way betrayed the cause of Conservatism, and he assailed Mr. Disraeli personally in a manner which made older members think of the days when Mr. Disraeli was denouncing Sir Robert Peel. No eloquence and no invective however could stay the movement begun by Mr. Gladstone. When the division was called there were 270 votes for the amendment, and 331 against it. The doom of the Irish Church was pronounced by a majority of 61. An interval was afforded for agitation on both sides. The House of Commons had only decided against Lord Stanley's amendment. Mr. Gladstone's resolutions had yet to be discussed. Lord Russell presided at a great meeting held in St. James's Hall for the purpose of expressing public sympathy with the movement to disestablish the Irish Church. Many meetings were held by those on the other side of the question as well; but it was obvious to everyone that there was no great force in the attempt at a defence of the Irish Church. That institution had in truth a position which only became less and less defensible the more it was studied. Every example and argument drawn from the history of the Church of England was but another condemnation of the Church of Ireland. The more strongly an Englishman was inclined to support his own Church, the more anxious he ought to have been to repudiate the claim of the Irish Church to a similar position.

Mr. Gladstone's first resolution came to a division about a month after the defeat of Lord Stanley's amendment. It was carried by a majority somewhat larger than that which had rejected the amendment—330 votes were given for the resolution; 265 against it. The majority for the resolution was

therefore 65. Mr. Disraeli quietly observed that the Government must take some decisive step in consequence of that vote; and a few days afterwards it was announced that as soon as the necessary business could be got through, Parliament would be dissolved and an appeal made to the country. On the last day of July the dissolution took place, and the elections came on in November. Not for many years had there been so important a general election. The keenest anxiety prevailed as to its results. The new constituencies created by the Reform Bill were to give their votes for the first time. The question at issue was not merely the existence of the Irish State Church. It was a general struggle of advanced Liberalism against Toryism. No one could doubt that Mr. Gladstone, if he came into power, would enter on a policy of more decided Liberalism than had ever been put into action since the days of the Reform Bill of Lord Grey and Lord John Russell. The result of the elections was on the whole what might have been expected. The Liberals had a great majority. But there were many curious and striking instances of the growing strength of Conservatism in certain parts of the country. Lancashire, once a very stronghold of Liberalism, returned only Tories for its county divisions, and even in most cases elected Tories to represent its boroughs. Eight Conservatives came in for the county of Lancaster, and among those whom their election displaced were no less eminent persons than Mr. Gladstone and Lord Hartington. Mr. Gladstone was defeated in South-west Lancashire, but the result of the contest had been generally anticipated, and therefore some of his supporters put him up for Greenwich also, and he was elected there. He had been passing step by step from less popular to more popular constituencies. From the University of Oxford he had passed to the Lancashire division, and now from the Lancashire constituency he went on to a place where the Liberal portion of the electors were inclined, for the most part, to be not merely Radical but democratic.

The contest in North Lancashire was made more interesting than it would otherwise have been by the fact that it was not alone a struggle between opposing principles and parties, but also between two great rival houses. Lord Hartington represented the great Cavendish family. Mr. Frederick Stanley was the younger son of Lord Derby. Lord Hartington was defeated by a large majority, and was left out of Parliament for a few months. He was afterwards elected for the Radnor

Boroughs. Mr. Mill was defeated at Westminster. His defeat was brought about by a combination of causes. He had been elected in a moment of sudden enthusiasm, and the enthusiasm had now had time to cool away. He had given some offence in various quarters by a too great independence of action and of expression. On many questions of deep interest he had shown that he was entirely out of harmony with the views of the vast majority of his constituents, whatever their religious denomination might be. He had done some things which people called eccentric, and an English popular constituency does not love eccentricity. His opponent, Mr. W. H. Smith, was very popular in Westminster, and had been quietly canvassing it for years. Some of the Westminster electors had probably grown tired of being represented by one who was called a philosopher. Some other prominent public men lost their seats. Mr. Roebuck was defeated in Sheffield. His defeat was partly due to the strong stand he had made against the trades-unions; but still more to the bitterness of the hostility he had shown to the Northern States during the American Civil War. Mr. Milner Gibson and Mr. Bernal Osborne were also unseated. The latter got into Parliament again. The former disappeared from public life. He had done good service at one time as an ally of Cobden and Bright. Mr. Lowe was elected the first representative of the University of London, on which the Conservative Reform Bill had conferred a seat. Mr. Disraeli afterwards humorously claimed the credit of having enabled Mr. Lowe to carry on his public career by providing for him the only constituency in England which would have accepted him as its representative. This was the first general election with household suffrage in boroughs and a lowered franchise in counties. Yet curiously enough the extreme democratic candidates, and those who were called the working-men's candidates, were in every instance rejected. The new Parliament was to all appearance less marked in its Liberalism than that which had gone before it. But so far as mere numbers went the Liberal party was much stronger than it had been. In the new House of Commons it could count upon a majority of about 120, whereas in the late Parliament it had but 60. Mr. Gladstone it was clear would now have everything in his own hands, and the country might look for a career of energetic reform.

While the debates on Mr. Gladstone's resolutions were

still going on, there came to England the news that Lord Brougham was dead. He had died at Cannes in his ninetieth year. His death was a quiet passing away from a world that had well-nigh forgotten him. Seldom has a political career been so strangely cut short as that of Lord Brougham. From the time when the Whig Administration was formed without him, he seemed to have no particular business in public life. He never had from that hour the slightest influence on any political party or any political movement. His restless figure was seen moving about the House of Lords like that of a man who felt himself out of place there, and was therefore out of humour with himself and his company. He often took part in debate, and for many years he continued to show all the fire and energy of his earlier days. But of late he had almost entirely dropped out of politics. Happily for him the Social Science Association was formed, and he acted for a long time as its principal guide, philosopher, and friend. He made speeches at its meetings, presided at many of its banquets, and sometimes showed that he could still command the resources of a massive eloquence. The men of the younger generation looked at him with interest and wonder; they found it hard to realise the fact that only a few years before he was one of the most conspicuous and energetic figures in political agitation. Now he seemed oddly like some dethroned king who occupies his leisure in botanical studies; some once famous commander, long out of harness, who amuses himself with learning the flute. There were perhaps some who forgot Brougham the great reformer altogether, and only thought of Brougham the patron and orator of the Social Science Association. He passed his time between Cannes, which he may be said to have discovered, and London. At one time he had had the idea of actually becoming a citizen of France, being of opinion that it would set a good example for the brotherhood of peoples if he were to show how a man could be a French and an English citizen at the same moment. He had outlived nearly all his early friends and foes. Melbourne, Grey, Durham, Campbell, Lyndhurst had passed away. The death of Lyndhurst had been a great grief to him. It is said that in his failing, later years he often directed his coachman to drive him to Lord Lyndhurst's house, as if his old friend and gossip were still among the living. At last Brougham began to give unmistakable signs of vanishing intelligence. His appearances in public were mournful exhibitions. He

sometimes sat at a dinner-party and talked loudly to himself of something which had no concern with the time, the place, or the company. His death created but a mere momentary thrill of emotion in England. He had made bitter enemies and cherished strong hatreds in his active years; and like all men who have strong hatreds, he had warm affections too. But the close friends and the bitter enemies were gone alike; and the agitation about the Irish Church was scarcely interrupted for a moment by the news of his death.

The Parliament which was called together in the close of 1868 was known to have before it the great task of endeavouring to govern Ireland on the principle enunciated by Fox seventy years before—that is, according to Irish ideas. Mr. Gladstone had proclaimed this purpose himself. He had made it known that he would endeavour to deal with Ireland's three great difficulties—the State Church, the tenure of land, and the system of university education. Men's minds were wrought up to the enterprise. The country was in a temper to try heroic remedies. The public were tired of government which merely tinkered at legislation, putting in a little patch here, and stopping up for the moment a little hole there. Perhaps, therefore, there was a certain disappointment as the general character of the new Parliament began to be understood. The eminent men on whom all eyes turned in the old Parliament were to be seen of all eyes in the new. It was clear that Mr. Gladstone would be master of the situation. But there did not seem anything particularly hero-like in the general aspect of the new House of Commons. Its composition was very much the same as that of the old. Vast sums of money had been spent upon the elections. Rich men were, as before, in immense preponderance. Elder and younger sons of great families were as many as ever. The English constituencies under the new suffrage were evidently no whit less fond of lords, no whit less devoted to wealth, than they had been under the old. Not a single man of extreme democratic opinions had a seat in the new House of Commons. Where any marked change had been made it showed itself in removing such men from Parliament rather than in returning them to it.

Mr. Disraeli did not meet the new Parliament as Prime Minister. He decided very properly that it would be a mere waste of public time to wait for the formal vote of the House of Commons, which would inevitably command him to sur-

render. He at once resigned his office, and Mr. Gladstone was immediately sent for by the Queen, and invited to form an Administration. Mr. Gladstone, it would seem, was only beginning his career. He was nearly sixty years of age, but there were scarcely any evidences of advancing years to be seen on his face, and he had all the fire of proud, indomitable youth in his voice and his manner. He had come into office at the head of a powerful party. There was hardly anything he could not do with such a following and with such personal energy. The Government he formed was one of remarkable strength. The one name upon its list, after that of the Prime Minister himself, which engaged the interest of the public, was that of Mr. Bright. Mr. Bright had not sought office, it had come to him. It was impossible that a Liberal ministry could now be formed without Mr. Bright's name appearing in it. Mr. Gladstone at first offered him the office of Secretary of State for India. The state of Mr. Bright's health would not allow him to undertake the very laborious duties of such a place, and probably in any case it would have been repugnant to his feelings to accept a position which might have called on him to give orders for the undertaking of a war. Every man in a Cabinet is of course responsible for all its acts; but there is still an evident difference, so far as personal feeling is concerned, between acquiescing in some inevitable policy of war and actually directing that war shall be made. The position of President of the Board of Trade was that which had been offered by Lord Palmerston to Mr. Bright's old friend, Richard Cobden, and it seemed in every way well suited to Mr. Bright himself. Many men felt a doubt as to the possibility of Mr. Bright's subduing his personal independence and his outspoken ways to the discipline and reticence of a Cabinet, and Mr. Bright himself appeared to be a little afraid that he should be understood as thoroughly approving of every measure in which he might, by official order, feel compelled to acquiesce. He cautioned his Birmingham constituents not to believe that he had changed any of his opinions until his own voice publicly proclaimed the change, and he made what might almost be called an appeal to them to remember that he was now one man serving in a band of men; no longer responsible only for himself, no longer independent of the acts of others.

Lord Granville was Secretary for the Colonies under the new Administration; Lord Clarendon Foreign Secretary

The Duke of Argyll was entrusted with the Indian Office. Mr. Cardwell, to all appearance one of the coldest and least warlike of men, was made Secretary for War, and had in his charge one of the greatest reforms of the administration. Lord Hartington, Lord Dufferin, Mr. Childers, and Mr. Bruce had places assigned to them. Mr. Layard became First Commissioner of Public Works. Mr. W. E. Forster had the office of Vice-President of the Council, and came in for work hardly less important than that of the Prime Minister himself. The Lord Chancellor was Lord Hatherley, formerly Sir William Page Wood. Many years before, when Lord Hatherley was only known as a rising man among advanced Liberals, and when Mr. Bright was still regarded by all true Conservatives as a Radical demagogue, Mr. Bright and Mr. Wood were talking of the political possibilities of the future. Mr. Bright jestingly expressed a hope that whenever he came to be member of a Cabinet, Mr. Wood might be the Lord Chancellor. Nothing could then have seemed less likely to come to pass. As Lord Hatherley and Mr. Bright met on their way to Windsor to wait on the Queen, Mr. Bright reminded his colleague of the jest that had apparently been prophetic.

Mr. Gladstone went to work at once with his Irish policy. On March 1, 1869, the Prime Minister introduced his measure for the disestablishment and partial disendowment of the Irish State Church. The proposals of the Government were, that the Irish Church should almost at once cease to exist as a State Establishment, and should pass into the condition of a free Episcopal Church. As a matter of course the Irish bishops were to lose their seats in the House of Lords. A synodal, or governing body, was to be elected from the clergy and laity of the Church and was to be recognised by the Government, and duly incorporated. The union between the Churches of England and Ireland was to be dissolved, and the Irish Ecclesiastical Courts were to be abolished. There were various and complicated arrangements for the protection of the life interests of those already holding positions in the Irish Church, and for the appropriation of the fund which would return to the possession of the State when all these interests had been fairly considered and dealt with. It must be owned that the Government dealt with vested interests in no niggard spirit. If they erred at all they erred on the side of too much generosity. But they had arrayed against them adversaries so strong that they probably felt it absolutely necessary to

buy off some of the opposition by a liberal compensation to all those who were to be deprived of their dignity as clergymen of a State Church. When, however, all had been paid off who could establish any claim, and some perhaps who had in strict fairness no claim whatever, there remained a large fund at the disposal of the Government. This they resolved to set apart for the relief of unavoidable suffering in Ireland.

The sum to be disposed of was very considerable. The gross value of the Irish Church property was estimated at sixteen millions. From this sum would have to be deducted nearly five millions for the vested interests of incumbents; one million seven hundred thousand for compensations to curates and lay compensations; half a million for private endowments; for the Maynooth Grant and the Regium Donum about a million and a quarter. There would be left nearly nine millions for any beneficent purpose on which the Government and the country could make up their minds. The Maynooth Grant and the Regium Donum were to go with the Irish Church, and the same principle of compensation was to be applied to those who were to be deprived of them. The Regium Donum was an allowance from the Sovereign for the maintenance of Presbyterian ministers in Ireland. It was begun by Charles II. and let drop by James, but was restored by William III. William felt grateful for the support given him by the Presbyterians in Ireland during his contest with James, and indeed had little preference for one form of the Protestant faith over another. William, in the first instance, fixed the grant as a charge upon the customs of Belfast. The Maynooth Grant has been already described in these pages. Both these grants, each a very small thing in itself, now came to an end, and the principle of equality among the religious denominations of Ireland was to be established.

The bill was stoutly resisted by Mr. Disraeli and his party. They resisted it as a whole, and they also fought it in detail. They proposed amendment after amendment in committee, and did all they could to stay its progress as well as to alter some of its arrangements. But there did not seem to be much of genuine earnestness in the speeches made by Mr. Disraeli. The fact that resistance was evidently hopeless had no doubt some effect upon the style of his eloquence. His speeches were amusing rather than impressive. They were full of good points; they sparkled with happy illustrations and allusions, odd conceits and bewildering paradoxes. But the orator had

evidently no faith in the cause he advocated; no faith, that is to say, in the possibility of its success. He must have seen too clearly that the Church as a State establishment in Ireland was doomed, and he had not that intensity of interest in its maintenance which would have made him fight the course, as he had fought many a course before, with all the passionate eloquence of desperation. One of his lieutenants, Mr. Gathorne Hardy, was more effective as a champion of the sinking Irish Church than Mr. Disraeli proved himself to be. Mr. Hardy was a man so constituted as to be only capable of seeing one side of a question at a time. He was filled with the conviction that the Government were attempting an act of spoliation and sacrilege, and he stormed against the meditated crime with a genuine energy which occasionally seemed to supply him with something like eloquence. A peculiar interest attached to the part taken in the debate by Sir Roundell Palmer. It was natural that Sir Roundell Palmer should be with Mr. Gladstone. Everyone expected in the first instance that he would have held high office in the new Administration. He was one of the very foremost lawyers and the best Parliamentary debaters of the day, and the woolsack seemed to be his fitting place. But Sir Roundell Palmer could not conscientiously agree to the disestablishment of the Irish State Church. He was willing to consent to very extensive alterations and reductions in the Establishment, but he could not go with Mr. Gladstone all the way to the abolition of the Church; and he therefore remained outside the Ministry, and opposed the bill. If the fate of the Irish Church could have been averted or even postponed by impassioned eloquence something might have been done to stay the stroke of doom. But the fate of the institution was sealed at the moment that Mr. Gladstone returned from the general elections in command of a Liberal majority. The House of Lords were prudent enough not to set themselves against the clear declaration of national opinion. Many amendments were introduced and discussed; and some of these led to a controversy between the two Houses of Parliament; but the controversy ended in compromise. On July 26, 1869, the measure for the disestablishment of the Irish Church received the royal assent.

Lord Derby did not long survive the passing of the measure which he had opposed with such fervour and so much pathetic dignity. He died before the Irish State Church had ceased to live. Doomed as it was, it outlasted its eloquent champion.

In the interval between the passing and the practical operation of Mr. Gladstone's bill, on October 23, Lord Derby died at Knowsley, the residence of the Stanleys in Lancashire. His death made no great gap in English politics. He had for some time ceased to assert any really influential place in public affairs. His career had been eminent and distinguished; but its day had long been done. Lord Derby never was a statesman; he was not even a great leader of a party; but he was a splendid figure-head for Conservatism in or out of power. He was, on the whole, a superb specimen of the English political nobleman. Proud of soul, but sweet in temper and genial in manner; dignified as men are who feel instinctively that dignity pertains to them, and therefore never think of how to assert or to maintain it, he was eminently fitted by temperament, by nature, and by fortune for the place it was given him to hold. His parliamentary oratory has already become a tradition. It served its purpose admirably for the time; it showed, as Macaulay said, that Lord Derby possessed the very instinct of parliamentary debate. It was not weighted with the thought which could have secured it a permanent place in political literature, nor had it the imagination which would have lifted it into an atmosphere above the level of Hansard. In Lord Derby's own day the unanimous opinion of both Houses of Parliament would have given him a place among the very foremost of parliamentary orators. Many competent judges went so far as to set him distinctly above all living rivals. Time has not ratified this judgment. It is impossible that the influence of an orator could have faded so soon if he had really been entitled to the praise which many of his contemporaries would freely have rendered to Lord Derby. The charm of his voice and style, his buoyant readiness, his rushing fluency, his rich profusion of words, his happy knack of illustration, allusion, and retort—all these helped to make men believe him a much greater orator than he really was. Something, too, was due to the influence of his position. It seemed a sort of condescension on the part of a great noble that he should consent to be an eloquent debater also, and to contend in parliamentary sword-play against professional champions like Peel and O'Connell and Brougham. It must count for something in Lord Derby's fame that, while far inferior to any of these men in political knowledge and in mental capacity, he could compare as an orator with each in turn, and—were it but for his own day, were it but while the magic

of his presence and his voice was yet a living influence—could be held by so many to have borne without disadvantage the test of comparison.

When the Irish Church had been disposed of, Mr. Gladstone at once directed his energies to the Irish land system. Ireland is essentially an agricultural country. It has few manufactures, not many large towns. Dublin, Belfast, Cork, Limerick, Waterford—these are the only towns that could be called large; below these we come to places that in most other countries would be spoken of as villages or hamlets. The majority of the population of Ireland live on the land and by the land. The condition of most of the Irish tenantry may be painted effectively in a single touch when it is said that they were tenants-at-will. That fact would of itself be almost enough to account for the poverty and the misery of the agricultural classes in Ireland. But there were other conditions, too, which tended the same way. The land of Ireland was divided among a comparatively small number of landlords, and the landlords were, as a rule, strangers, the representatives of a title acquired by conquest. Many of them were habitual absentees, who would as soon have thought of living in Ashantee as in Munster or Connaught. The Irish agricultural population held the land which was their only means of living at the mercy of the landlord or his agent. They had no interest in being industrious and improving their land. If they improved the patch of soil they worked on, their rent was almost certain to be raised, or they were turned out of the land without receiving a farthing of compensation for their improvements. Of course there were many excellent landlords, humane and kindly men—men, too, who saw the wisdom of being humane and kind. But in the majority of cases the landlords and the agents held firmly by what seemed to them the right of property—the right to get as high a price for a piece of land as it would fetch in open competition. The demand for land was so great, the need of land was so vital, that men would offer any price for it. When the tenant had got hold of his piece of land, he had no idea of cultivating it to the best of his strength and opportunities. Why should he? The moment his holding began to show a better appearance, that moment he might look to having his rent raised, or to being turned out in favour of some competitor who offered higher terms for occupation. Why should he improve? Whenever he was turned out of the land he would have to leave his improvements for the

benefit of the landlord or the new comer. He was, therefore, content to scratch the soil instead of really cultivating it. He extracted all he could from it in his short day. He lived from hand to mouth, from hour to hour.

In one province of Ireland, indeed, a better condition of things existed. Over the greater part of Ulster the tenant-right system prevailed. This system was a custom merely, but it had gradually come to acquire something like the force of law. The principle of tenant-right was that a man should be allowed to remain in undisturbed possession of his holding as long as he paid his rent; that he should be entitled, on giving up the land, to compensation for unexhausted improvements, and that he should be at liberty to sell the 'good-will' of his farm for what it would fetch in the market. The tenant was free to do what a man who has a long lease of any holding may do; he might sell to any bidder of whom his landlord approved the right to enter on the occupancy of the place. Wherever this tenant-right principle prevailed there was industry, there was prosperity; where it did not prevail was the domain of poverty, idleness, discontent, and crime. The one demand of the Irish agricultural population everywhere was for some form of fixity of tenure. The demand was neglected or refused by generations of English statesmen, chiefly because no statesman would take the trouble to distinguish between words and things; between shadowy, pedantic theories and clear, substantial facts. 'Tenant-right,' said Lord Palmerston, amid the cheers of an assembly mainly composed of landlords, 'is landlord's wrong.' Lord Palmerston forgot that the landlord, like everyone else in the commonwealth, holds even his dearest rights of property subject to the condition that his assertion of them is not inconsistent with the general weal. The landlord holds his land as the shipowner holds his ship and the railway company its lines of rail; subject to the right of the State to see that the duties of possession are properly fulfilled, and that the ownership is not allowed to become a public danger and a nuisance. Land is, from its very nature, from the fact that it cannot be increased in extent, and that the possession by one man is the exclusion of another, the form of property over which the State would most naturally be expected to reserve a right of ultimate control. Yet English statesmen for generations complacently asserted the impossibility of any legislative interference with the right of the landlord, as if legislation had

not again and again interfered with the right of the factory owner, the owner of mines, the possessor of railway shares, the shopkeeper; the right of the master over his apprentice, the mistress in the hire of her maid-of-all-work.

If ever there was a creature of law, and of authority acting in the place of law, it was the landlordism of Ireland. It was imposed upon the country and the people. It could not plead in support of any of its alleged rights even that prescriptive title which grows up with the growth of an institution that has held its place during all the ages to which tradition or memory goes back. The landlordism of Ireland was, compared with most European institutions, a thing of the day before yesterday. It was the creation of conquest, the impost of confiscation. It could plead no title whatever to maintain an unlimited right of action in opposition to the welfare of the people on whom it was forced. At least it could claim no such title when once the time had passed away which insisted that the right of conquest superseded all other human rights, that the tenant, like the slave, had no rights which his master was bound to respect, and that the common weal meant simply the interests and the privileges of the ruling class. The moment the title of the Irish land system came to be fairly examined, it was seen to be full of flaws. It was dependent on conditions that had never been fulfilled. It had not even made the landlord class prosperous. It had not even succeeded, as no doubt some of its founders intended that it should succeed, in colonising the island with English and Scotch settlers. For generations the land tenure system of Ireland had been the subject of parliamentary debate and parliamentary inquiry. Nothing came of all this. The supposed right of the landlord stopped the way. The one simple demand of the occasion was, as we have shown, security of tenure, and it was an article of faith with English statesmanship until Mr. Gladstone's time that security for the tenant was confiscation for the landlord.

Mr. Gladstone came into power full of genuine reforming energy and without the slightest faith in the economic wisdom of our ancestors. In a speech delivered by him during his electioneering campaign in Lancashire, he had declared that the Irish upas-tree had three great branches: the State Church, the Land Tenure System, and the System of Education, and that he meant to hew them all down if he could. On February 15, 1870, Mr. Gladstone introduced his Irish

Land Bill into the House of Commons. Mr. Gladstone's measure overthrew once for all the doctrine of the landlord's absolute and unlimited right. It recognised a certain property or partnership of the tenant in the land which he tilled. Mr. Gladstone took the Ulster tenant-right as he found it, and made it a legal institution. In places where the Ulster practice, or something analogous to it, did not exist, he threw upon the landlord the burden of proof as regarded the right of eviction. The tenant disturbed in the possession of his land could claim compensation for improvements, and the bill reversed the existing assumption of the law by presuming all improvements to be the property of the tenant, and leaving it to the landlord, if he could, to prove the contrary. The bill established a special judicial machinery for carrying out its provisions. It allowed the tribunals thus instituted to take into consideration not merely the strict legal conditions of each case, but also any circumstances that might affect the claim of the tenant as a matter of equity. Mr. Gladstone's great object was to bring about a state of things by virtue of which a tenant should not be dispossessed of his holding so long as he continued to pay his rent, and should in any case be entitled to full compensation for any substantial improvements which his energy or his capital might have effected. Mr. Gladstone, however, allowed landlords, under certain conditions, to contract themselves out of the provisions of the bill, and these conditions were so largely availed of in some parts of Ireland that there were more evictions after the bill had become law than before it had yet been thought of. On this ground the measure was actually opposed by some of the popular representatives of Ireland. The general opinion, however, then and since was, that the bill was of inestimable value to Ireland in the mere fact that it completely upset the fundamental principles on which legislation had always previously dealt with Irish land tenure. It put an end to the reign of the landlord's absolute power; it reduced the landlord to the level of every other proprietor, of every other man in the country who had anything to sell or hire. It decided once for all against Lord Palmerston's famous dogma, and declared that tenant-right was not landlord's wrong. Therefore the new legislation might in one sense have well been called revolutionary.

The bill passed without substantial alteration. On August 1, 1870, the bill received the Royal assent. The second

branch of the upas-tree had been hewn down; but the woodman's axe had yet to be laid to a branch of a tougher fibre, well calculated to turn the edge of even the best weapon, and to jar the strongest arm that wielded it. Mr. Gladstone had dealt with Church and land; he had yet to deal with university education. He had gone with Irish ideas thus far.

CHAPTER XXIV.

'REFORMATION IN A FLOOD.'

On June 10, 1870, men's minds were suddenly turned away from thought of political controversy to a country house near the Gad's Hill of Shakespeare, on the road to Rochester, where the most popular author of his day was lying dead. On the evening of June 8, Mr. Dickens became suddenly seized with paralysis. He fell into an unconscious state and continued so until his death, the evening after. The news was sent over the country on the 10th, and brought a pang as of personal sorrow into almost every home. Dickens was not of an age to die; he had scarcely passed his prime. Born early in February 1812, he had not gone far into his fifty-ninth year. No author of our time came near him in popularity; perhaps no English author ever was so popular during his own life. To an immense number of men and women in these countries, Dickens stood for literature; to not a few his cheery teaching was sufficient as philosophy and even as religion. Soon after his death, as might have been expected, a certain reaction took place, and for a while it became the fashion to smile quietly at Dickens's teaching and his influence. That mood too will have its day and will pass. It may be safely predicted that Dickens will be found to have made a firm place in English literature, although that place will probably not be so high as his admirers would once have claimed for him. Londoners were familiar with Dickens's personal appearance as well as with his writings, and certain London streets did not seem quite the same when his striking face and energetic movements could be seen there no more. It is likely that Dickens overworked his exuberant vital energy, his superb resources of physical health and animal spirits. In work and play, in writing and in exercising, he was unsparing of his

powers. Men who were early companions of his, and who had not half his vital power, outlived him many years. He was buried in Westminster Abbey, although his own desire was to be laid quietly in Rochester churchyard. It was held that the national cemetery claimed him. We cannot help thinking it a pity the claim was made. Most of the admirers of Dickens would have been better pleased to think that he lay beneath the green turf of the ancient churchyard, in venerable and storied Rochester, amid the scenes that he loved and taught so many others to love.

Nothing in modern English history is like the rush of the extraordinary years of reforming energy on which the new Administration had now entered. Mr. Gladstone's Government had to grapple with five or six great questions of reform, any one of which might have seemed enough to engage the whole attention of an ordinary Administration. The new Prime Minister had pledged himself to abolish the State Church in Ireland and to reform the Irish Land Tenure system. He had made up his mind to put an end to the purchase of commissions in the army. Recent events and experiences had convinced him that it was necessary to introduce the system of voting by ballot. He accepted for his Government the responsibility of originating a complete scheme of National Education. Meanwhile, there were many questions of the highest importance in foreign policy waiting for solution. It required no common energy and strength of character to keep closely to the work of domestic reform, amid such exciting discussions in foreign policy all the while, and with the war-trumpet ringing for a long time in the ears of England.

Mr. Forster's Education Bill may be said to have been run side by side with the Irish Land Bill. The manner in which England had neglected the education of her poor children had long been a reproach to her civilisation. She was behind every other great country in the world; she was behind many countries that in nowise professed to be great. For years the statesmanship of England had been kept from any serious attempt to grapple with the evil by the doctrine that popular education ought not to be the business of a Government. Private charity was eked out in a parsimonious and miserable manner by a scanty dole from the State; and as a matter of course, where the direst poverty prevailed, and naturally brought the extremest need for assistance to education, there the wants of the place were least efficiently sup-

plied. It therefore came about that more than two-thirds of the children of the country were absolutely without instruction. One of the first great tasks which Mr. Gladstone's Government undertook was to reform this condition of things, and to provide England for the first time in her history with a system of National Education. On February 17, 1870, Mr. Forster introduced a bill, having for its object to provide for public elementary education in England and Wales. Mr. Forster proposed to establish a system of School Boards in England and Wales; and to give to each board the power to frame bye-laws compelling the attendance of all children, from five to twelve years of age, within the school district. The Government did not see their way to a system of direct and universal compulsion. They therefore fell back on a compromise, by leaving the power to compel in the hands of the local authorities. Existing schools were, in many instances, to be adopted by the bill, and to receive Government aid, on condition that they possessed a certain amount of efficiency in education, that they submitted themselves to the examination of an undenominational inspector, and that they admitted a conscience clause as part of their regulations. The funds were to be procured, partly by local rates, partly by grants from the Treasury, and partly by the fees paid in the paying schools. There were of course to be free schools provided, where the poverty of the population was such as, in the opinion of the local authorities, to render gratuitous instruction indispensable.

The bill at first was favourably received. But the general harmony of opinion did not last long. Mr. Forster found, when he came to examine into the condition of the machinery of education in England, that there was already a system of schools existing under the charge of religious bodies of various kinds: the State Church, and the Roman Catholic Church, and other authorities. These he proposed to adopt as far as possible into his scheme; to affiliate them, as it were, to the Governmental system of education. But he had to make some concession to the religious principles on which such schools were founded. He could not by any stroke of authority undertake to change them all into secular schools. He therefore proposed to meet the difficulty by adopting regulations compelling every school of this kind which obtained Government aid or recognition to accept a conscience clause, by means of which the religious convictions of parents and

children should be scrupulously regarded in the instruction given during the regular school hours. On this point the Nonconformists as a body broke away from the Government. They laid down the broad principle that no State aid whatever should be given to any schools but those which were conducted on strictly secular and undenominational principles. Their principle was that public money, the contribution of citizens of all shades of belief, ought only to be given for such teaching as the common opinion of the country was agreed upon. The contribution of the Jew, they argued, ought not to be exacted in order to teach Christianity; the Protestant ratepayer ought not to be compelled to pay for the instruction of Roman Catholic children in the tenets of their faith; the Irish Catholic in London or Birmingham ought not to be called upon to pay in any way for the teaching of distinctively Protestant doctrine

Mr. Forster could not admit the principle for which they contended. He could not say that it would be a fair and equal plan to offer secular education, and that alone, to all bodies of the community; for he was well aware that there were such bodies who were conscientiously opposed to what was called secular education, and who could not agree to accept it. He therefore endeavoured to establish a system which should satisfy the consciences of all the denominations. But the Nonconformists would not meet him on this ground. They fought Mr. Forster long and ably and bitterly. The Liberal minister was compelled to accept more than once the aid of the Conservative party; for that party as a whole adopted the principle which insisted on religious instruction in every system of national education. It more than once happened, therefore, that Mr. Forster and Mr. Gladstone found themselves appealing to the help of Conservatives and of Roman Catholics against that dissenting body of Englishmen who were usually the main support of the Liberal party. It happened too, very unfortunately, that at this time Mr. Bright's health had so far given way as to compel him to seek complete rest from parliamentary duties. His presence and his influence with the Nonconformists might perhaps have tended to moderate their course of action, and to reconcile them to the policy of the Government even on the subject of national education; but his voice was silent then, and for long after. The split between the Government and the Nonconformists became something like a complete severance.

Many angry and bitter words were spoken in the House of Commons on both sides. On one occasion, there was an almost absolute declaration on the part of Mr. Gladstone and of Mr. Miall, a leading Nonconformist, that they had parted company for ever. The Education Bill was nevertheless a great success. The School Boards became really valuable and powerful institutions, and the principle of the cumulative vote was tested for the first time in their elections. When School Boards were first established in the great cities, their novelty and the evident importance of the work they had to do, attracted to them some of the men of most commanding intellect and position. The London School Board had as its chairman, for instance, Lord Lawrence, the great Indian statesman, lately a Viceroy, and for one of its leading members Professor Huxley. An important peculiarity of the School Boards too, was the fact, that they admitted women to the privileges of membership; and this admission was largely availed of. Women voted, proposed amendments, sat on committees, and in every way took their part of the duties of citizenship in the business of national education. When the novelty of the system wore off, some of the more eminent men gradually fell out of the work, but the School Boards never failed to maintain a high and useful standard of membership. They began and continued to be strictly representative institutions. Most of their work even still remains to be done. But so far as it has gone, there can be no doubt of the success it has achieved. It must, however, be owned that the Gladstone administration was weakened and not strengthened by its education scheme. One of the first symptoms of coming danger to Mr. Gladstone's Government was found in the estrangement of the English Nonconformists.

The Government were a little unfortunate too as regarded another great reform—that of the organisation of the army. Mr. Cardwell, the War Minister, brought forward a scheme for the reconstruction of the army, by combining under one system of discipline the regular troops, the militia, the volunteers, and the reserve. One most important part of the scheme was the abolition of the purchase system for officers' commissions, and the substitution of promotion according to merit. Except in certain regiments, and in certain branches of the service outside England itself, the rule was, that an officer obtained his commission by purchase. Promotion was got in the same way. An officer bought a step up in the

service. A commission was a vested interest; a personal property. The owner had paid so much for it, and he expected to get so much for it when he thought fit to sell it. The regulation price recognised by law and the Horse Guards was not by any means the actual price of the commission. It became worth much more to the holder, and of course he expected to get its real price, not its regulation, or nominal and imaginary price. This anomalous and extraordinary system had grown up with the growth of the English army, until it seemed in the eyes of many an essential condition of the army's existence. It found defenders almost everywhere. Because the natural courage, energy, and fighting power of Englishmen, Irishmen, and Scotchmen had made a good army in spite of this unlucky practice, because the army did not actually collapse or wither away under its influence, many men were convinced that the army could not get on without it. The abolition of the purchase system had been advocated by generations of reformers without much success. But the question did not become really pressing and practical until Mr. Gladstone, on his accession to power, resolved to include it in his list of reforms. Of course Mr. Cardwell's proposition was bitterly and pertinaciously opposed. The principle of army purchase was part of a system in which large numbers of the most influential class had a vested interest. It was part of the aristocratic principle. To admit men to commissions in the army by pure merit and by mere competition would be to deprive the service of its specially aristocratic character. A large number of the Conservative party set themselves, therefore, not merely to oppose but to obstruct the bill. They proposed all manner of amendments, and raised all manner of discussions, in which the same arguments were repeated over and over again by the same speakers in almost the same words. Men who had never before displayed the slightest interest in the saving of the public money, were now clamorous opponents of the bill on the ground that the abolition of purchase would render necessary the outlay of a large sum for compensation to officers thus deprived of their vested interests. This outlay the Liberal Government, usually censured by their opponents on the ground of their pinching parsimony, were quite willing to meet. Mr. Cardwell was prepared to make provision for it. Economy, however, became suddenly a weapon in the hands of some of the Conservatives. The session was going on, and there seemed little

prospect of the Opposition being discouraged or slackening in their energy. The Government began to see that it would be impossible to carry through the vast and complicated scheme of army reorganisation which they had introduced, and Mr. Gladstone was resolved that the system of purchase must come to an end. It was thought expedient at last, and while the bill was still fighting its way through committee, to abandon a great part of the measure and persevere for the present only with those clauses which related to the abolition of the system of purchase. Under these conditions the bill passed its third reading in the Commons on July 3, 1871, not without a stout resistance at the last and not by a very overwhelming majority. This condition of things gave the majority in the House of Lords courage to oppose the scheme. A meeting of Conservative peers was held, and it was resolved that the Duke of Richmond should offer an amendment to the motion for the second reading of the Army Purchase Bill. The Duke of Richmond was exactly the sort of man that a party under such conditions would agree upon as the proper person to move an amendment. He was an entirely respectable and safe politician; a man of great influence so far as dignity and territorial position were concerned; a seemingly moderate Tory who showed nothing openly of the mere partisan and yet was always ready to serve his party. When the motion for the second reading came on, the Duke of Richmond moved a cleverly constructed amendment, declaring that the House of Lords was unwilling to agree to the motion until a comprehensive and complete scheme of army reorganisation should have been laid before it. But of course the object of the House of Lords was not to obtain further information; it was simply to get rid of the bill for the present. The amendment of the Duke of Richmond was adopted.

Then Mr. Gladstone took a course which became the subject of keen and embittered controversy. Purchase in the army was permitted only by Royal warrant. The whole system was the creation of Royal regulation. The House of Commons had pronounced against the system. The House of Lords had not pronounced in favour of it. The House of Lords had not rejected the measure of the Government, but only expressed a wish for delay and for further information. Delay however would have been fatal to the measure for that session. Mr. Gladstone therefore devised a way for checkmating what he knew to be the design of the House of Lords.

It was an ingenious plan; it was almost an audacious plan; it took the listener's breath away to hear of it. Mr. Gladstone announced that as the system of purchase was the creation of Royal regulation, he had advised the Queen to take the decisive step of cancelling the Royal warrant which made purchase legal. A new Royal warrant was therefore immediately issued, declaring that, on and after November 1 following, all regulations made by her Majesty or any of her predecessors regulating or fixing the prices at which commissions might be bought, or in any way authorising the purchase or sale of such commissions, should be cancelled. As far as regarded purchase, therefore, the controversy came suddenly to an end. The House of Lords had practically nothing to discuss. All that was left of the Government scheme on which the Peers could have anything to say was that part of the bill which provided compensation for those whom the abolition of the system of purchase would deprive of certain vested interests. For the Lords to reject the bill as it now stood would merely be to say that such officers should have no compensation. Astonishment fell upon the minds of most who heard Mr. Gladstone's determination. After a moment of bewilderment it was received with a wild outburst of Liberal exultation. It was felt to be a splendid party triumph. The House of Lords had been completely foiled. The tables had been turned on the Peers. Nothing was left for the House of Lords but to pass the bill as quickly as possible, coupling its passing, however, with a resolution announcing that it was passed only in order to secure to officers of the army the compensation they were entitled to receive, and censuring the Government for having attained, 'by the exercise of the prerogative and without the aid of Parliament,' the principal object which they contemplated in the bill.

The House of Lords was then completely defeated. The system of purchase in the army was abolished by one sudden and clever stroke. The Government were victorious over their opponents. Yet the hearts of many sincere Liberals sank within them as they heard the announcement of the triumph. Mr. Disraeli condemned in the strongest terms the sudden exercise of the prerogative of the Crown to help the Ministry out of a difficulty; and many a man of mark and influence on the Liberal benches felt that there was good ground for the strictures of the leader of the Opposition. Mr. Fawcett in particular condemned the act of the Government.

He insisted that if it had been done by a Tory minister it would have been passionately denounced by Mr. Gladstone amid the plaudits of the whole Liberal party. Mr. Fawcett was a man who occupied a remarkable position in the House of Commons. In his early manhood he met with an accident which entirely destroyed the sight of his eyes. He made the noble resolve that he would nevertheless follow unflinchingly the career he had previously mapped out for himself, and would not allow the terrible calamity he had suffered to drive him from the active life of the political world. His tastes were for politics and political economy. He published a manual of political economy; he wrote largely on the subject in reviews and magazines; he was elected Professor of the science in his own university, Cambridge. He was in politics as well as in economics a pupil of Mr. Mill; and with the encouragement and support of Mr. Mill he became a candidate for a seat in Parliament. He was a Liberal of the most decided tone; but he was determined to hold himself independent of party. He stood for Southwark against Mr. Layard in 1857, and was defeated; he contested Cambridge and Brighton at subsequent elections, and at last in 1865 he was successful at Brighton. He was not long in the House of Commons before it was acknowledged that his political career was likely to be something of a new force in Parliament. A remarkably powerful reasoner, he was capable notwithstanding his infirmity of making a long speech full of figures and of statistical calculations. His memory was fortunately so quick and powerful as to enable him easily to dispense with all the appliances which even well-trained speakers commonly have to depend upon when they enter into statistical controversy. In Parliament he held faithfully to the purpose with which he had entered it, and was a thorough Liberal in principles, but absolutely independent of the expedients and sometimes of the mere discipline of party. If he believed that the Liberal ministers were going wrong, he censured them as freely as though they were his political opponents. On this occasion he felt strongly about the course Mr. Gladstone had taken, and he expressed himself in language of unmeasured condemnation. It seems hard to understand how any independent man could have come to any other conclusion. The exercise of the Royal prerogative was undoubtedly legal. Much time was wasted in testifying to its legality. The question in dispute was whether its sudden introduction in

such a manner was a proper act on the part of the Government; whether it was right to cut short by virtue of the Queen's prerogative a debate which had previously been carried on without the slightest intimation that the controversy was to be settled in any other way than that of the ordinary Parliamentary procedure. There seems to be only one reasonable answer to this question. The course taken by Mr. Gladstone was unusual, unexpected, unsustained by any precedent; it was a mere surprise; it was not fair to the House of Lords; it was not worthy of the occasion, or the ministry, or the Liberal principles they professed. This great reform could at most have been delayed for only a single session by the House of Lords. It is not even certain that the House of Lords, if firmly met, would have carried their opposition long enough to delay the measure by a single session. In any case the time lost would not have counted for much; better by far to have waited another session than to have carried the point at once by a stroke of policy which seemed impatient, petulant, and even unfair. Among the many influences already combining to weaken Mr. Gladstone's authority, the impression produced by this stroke of policy was not the least powerful.

The Ballot Bill was introduced by Mr. Forster on February 20, 1871. Its principal object was of course the introduction of the system of secret voting. On entering the polling-place, the voter was to mention to the official in charge his name and his place of residence. The official, having ascertained that he was properly on the register, would hand him a stamped paper on which to inscribe his vote. The voter was to take the paper into a separate compartment and there privately mark a cross opposite the printed name of the candidate for whom he desired to record his vote. He was then to fold up the paper in such a manner as to prevent the mark from being seen, and in the presence of the official, drop it into the urn for containing the votes. By this plan Mr. Forster proposed not only to obtain secrecy but also to prevent personation. The bill likewise undertook to abolish the old practice of nominating candidates publicly by speeches at the hustings. Instead of a public nomination it was intended that the candidates should be nominated by means of a paper containing the names of a proposer and seconder and eight assentors, all of whom must be registered voters. This paper being handed to the returning

officer would constitute a nomination. Thus was abolished one of the most characteristic and time-dishonoured peculiarities of electioneering. Every humorous writer, every satirist with pencil or pen, from Hogarth to Dickens, had made merry with the scenes of the nomination day. In England the candidates were proposed and seconded in face of each other on a public platform in some open street or marketplace in the presence of a vast tumultuous crowd, three-fourths of whom were generally drunk, and all of whom were inflamed by the passion of a furious partisanship. Fortunate indeed was the orator whose speech was anything more than dumb show. Brass bands and drums not unusually accompanied the efforts of the speakers to make themselves heard. Brickbats, dead cats, and rotten eggs came flying like bewildering meteors across the eyes of the rival politicians on the hustings. The crowds generally enlivened the time by a series of faction fights among themselves. No ceremonial could be at once more useless and more mischievous.

The Bill introduced by Mr. Forster would have deserved the support of all rational beings if it proposed no greater reform than simply the abolition of this abominable system. But the ballot had long become an indispensable necessity. The gross and growing corruption and violence which disgraced every election began to make men feel that something must be done to get rid of such hideous abuses. Mr. Bright had always been an earnest advocate of the ballot system; and partly no doubt under his influence, and partly by the teaching of experience and observation, Mr. Gladstone became a convert to the same opinion. In 1869 a committee of the House of Commons was appointed, on the motion of Mr. Bruce, the Home Secretary, to inquire into the manner of conducting parliamentary and municipal elections. Its report was on the whole decidedly in favour of the principle of secret voting. Public opinion came round to the principle at once—the public out of doors that is; for a great many members of both Houses of Parliament were still unconverted. Mr. Forster's Bill was stoutly resisted by the Conservatives. A good many Liberal members liked the ballot in their hearts little better than the Tories did. The long delays which interposed between the introduction of Mr. Forster's Bill and its passing through the House of Commons gave the House of Lords a plausible excuse for rejecting it altogether. The Bill was not read a third time in the Commons until August 8; it

was not sent up to the Lords until the 10th of that month—a date later than that usually fixed for the close of the session. Lord Shaftesbury moved that the Bill be rejected on the ground that there was no time left for a proper consideration of it, and his motion was carried by ninety-seven votes to forty-eight. Mr. Gladstone accepted the decision of the Lords as a mere passing delay, and with the beginning of the next session the ballot came up again. It was presented in the form of a Bill to amend the laws relating to procedure at parliamentary and municipal elections, and it included of course the introduction of the system of secret voting. The Bill passed quickly through the House of Commons. Those who most disliked it began now to see that they must make up their minds to meet their fate. At the instance of the House of Lords however the ballot was introduced as an experiment, and the Act was passed to continue in force for eight years; that is, until the end of 1880. We may anticipate matters a little by saying that no measure of reform introduced through all that season of splendid reforming energy has given more universal satisfaction or worked with happier effect than the ballot.

The University Tests Bill was one of the greatest measures carried successfully into legislation during this season of unparalleled activity. The effect of this Bill was to admit all lay students of whatever faith to the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge on equal terms. This settled practically a controversy and removed a grievance which had been attracting keen public interest for at least five-and-thirty years. The Government also passed a Trades Union Bill, moderating, as has already been shown, the legislation which bore harshly on the workmen. They established by Act of Parliament the Local Government Board, a new department of the administration entrusted with the care of the public health, the control of the Poor Law system, and all regulations applying to the business of districts throughout the country. The Government repealed the ridiculous and almost forgotten Ecclesiastical Titles Bill.

The popularity of Mr. Gladstone's Government was all the time somewhat impaired by the line of action, and even perhaps by the personal deportment, of some of its members. Mr. Lowe's budgets were not popular; and Mr. Lowe had a taste for sarcasm which it was pleasant no doubt to indulge in at the expense of heavy men, but which was, like other pleasant things, a little dangerous when enjoyed too freely. One

of Mr. Lowe's budgets contained a proposition to make up for deficiency of income by a tax on matches. The match trade rose up in arms against the proposal. The trade was really a very large one, employing vast numbers of poor people, both in the manufacture and the sale, especially in the east end of London. All the little boys and girls of the metropolis whose poor bread depended on the trade arose in infantile insurrection against Mr. Lowe. There were vast processions of match-makers and match-sellers to Palace Yard to protest against the tax. The contest was pitiful, painful, ludicrous; no Ministry could endure it long. Mr. Lowe was only too glad to withdraw from his unenviable position. It was not pleasant to be regarded as a sort of ogre by thousands of poor little ragged boys and girls. Mr. Lowe withdrew his unlucky proposal, and set himself to work to repair by other ways and means the ravages which warlike times had made in his financial system. Another member of the Administration, Mr. Ayrton, a man of much ability but still more self-confidence, was constantly bringing himself and his Government into quarrels. He was blessed with a gift of offence. If a thing could be done either civilly or rudely, Mr. Ayrton was pretty sure to do it rudely. He was impatient with dull people, and did not always remember that those unhappy persons not only have their feelings, but sometimes have their votes. He quarrelled with officials; he quarrelled with the newspapers; he seemed to think a civil tongue gave evidence of a feeble intellect. He pushed his way along, trampling on people's prejudices with about as much consideration as a steam-roller shows for the gravel it crushes. Even when Mr. Ayrton was in the right he had a wrong way of showing it.

The Emperor Napoleon had made war upon Prussia to recover his military popularity, which was much injured by the Mexican expedition and its ghastly failure. He forced the quarrel on the pretext that the Spanish people had invited a distant relation of the King of Prussia to become Sovereign of Spain. Louis Napoleon managed to put himself completely in the wrong. The King of Prussia at once induced his relative to withdraw from the candidature in order not to disturb the susceptibilities of France; and then the French Government pressed for a general pledge that the King of Prussia would never on any future occasion allow of any similar candidature. When it came to this, there was an end to negotiation. It was clear then that the Emperor was resolved to have a

quarrel. Count Bismarck must have smiled a grim smile. His enemy had delivered himself into Bismarck's hands. The Emperor had been for some time in failing health. He had not been paying much attention to the details of his administration. False security and self-conceit had operated among his generals and his War Department to the utter detriment of the army. Nothing was ready. The whole system was falling to pieces. Long after France had declared war, the army that was to go to Berlin was only dragging heavily towards the frontier. The experience of what had happened to Austria might have told anyone that the moment Prussia saw her opportunity she would move with the direct swiftness of an eagle's flight. But the French army stuck as if it was in mud. What everyone expected came to pass. The Prussians came down on the French like the rush of a torrent. The fortunes of the war were virtually decided in a day. Then the French lost battle after battle. The Emperor dared not return to Paris. The defence—for the Prussians soon became the invaders—was carried on with regard to the Emperor's political fortunes rather than to the military necessities of the hour. There were nothing but French defeats until there came at last the crowning disaster of Sedan. The Emperor surrendered his sword, and was a captive in the hands of his enemies. The Second Empire was gone in a moment. Paris proclaimed the Republic; the Empress Eugénie fled to England; the conqueror at Versailles was hailed as German Emperor. France lost two provinces, Alsace and Lorraine, and had to pay an enormous fine.

The sympathies of the English people generally were at first almost altogether with Prussia. But when the Empire fell the feeling suddenly changed. It was the common idea that the Prussians ought to have been content with the complete destruction of the Bonapartist Empire and have made generous terms with the Republic. Great popular meetings were held in London, and in various provincial cities, to express sympathy with the hardly-entreated French. Many persons everywhere thought the Government ought to do something to assist the French Republic. Some were of opinion that the glory of England would suffer if she did not get into a fight with some Power or other. It came out in the course of the eager diplomatic discussions which were going on that there had been some secret talk at different times of a private engagement between France and Prussia which would have

allowed France on certain conditions to annex Belgium. This astounding revelation excited alarm and anger in England. The Government met that possible danger by at once pressing upon France and Prussia a new treaty, by which these Powers bound themselves jointly with England to maintain the independence of Belgium and to take up arms against any State invading it. The Government might fairly claim to have thus provided satisfactorily against any menace to the integrity and independence of Belgium, and they prepared against the more general dangers of the hour by asking for a large vote to enable them to strengthen the military defences of the country. But they were seriously embarrassed by the manner in which Russia suddenly proposed to deal with the Treaty of Paris. One article of that Treaty declared that 'the Black Sea is neutralised; its waters and its ports, thrown open to the mercantile marine of every nation, are formally and in perpetuity interdicted to the flag of war, either of the Powers possessing its coasts or of any other Power,' and the Sultan of Turkey and the Emperor of Russia engaged to establish or maintain no military or maritime arsenals on the shores of that sea. Russia now took advantage of the war between France and Prussia to say that she would not submit to be bound by that article of the Treaty any longer. The Russian statesmen pleaded as a justification of this blunt and sudden proceeding that the Treaty of Paris had been ignored by other Powers and in a variety of ways since the time of its signature, and that Russia could not be expected to endure for ever an article which bore heavily, directly, and specially upon her.

The manner of making the announcement was startling, ominous, and offensive. But there really was not much that any English statesman could do to interfere with Russia's declared intentions. It was not likely that France and Prussia would stop just then from the death-grapple in which they were engaged to join in coercing Russia to keep to the disputed article in the Treaty. Austria of course would not under such circumstances undertake to interfere. It would have been a piece of preposterous quixotry on the part of England to act alone. To enforce the Treaty was out of the question; but on the other hand it did not look seemly that the European powers should put up quite tamely with the dictatorial resolve of Russia. The ingenious mind of Count Bismarck found a way of putting a fair show on the action of Europe. At his suggestion a conference of the representatives of the powers

which had signed the Treaty was held in London to talk the whole matter over. This graceful little fiction was welcomed by all diplomatists. The conference met on January 17, 1871, with every becoming appearance of a full belief in the minds of all its members that the Russian Government had merely announced its wish to have the clause in the Treaty abrogated as a matter for the consideration of the European powers, and that the conference was to be assembled 'without any foregone conclusion as to its results.' Then the conference solemnly agreed upon a Treaty abrogating the clause for the neutralisation of the Black Sea. There was something a little farcical about the whole transaction. It did not tend to raise the credit or add to the popularity of the English Government. We do not know that there was anything better to do; we can only say that the Government deserves commiseration which at an important European crisis can do nothing better.

The American Government now announced that the time had come when they must take some decided steps for the settlement of the *Alabama* claims. Attempts had already been made at a convention for the settlement of the claims. In one instance a convention, devised by Mr. Reverdy Johnson, then American Minister in England, had actually been signed by Lord Clarendon, Foreign Secretary, whose death in June 1870 was followed by Lord Granville's removal from the Colonial to the Foreign Office. The Senate of the United States however rejected this convention by a majority of fifty-four to one, and Mr. Reverdy Johnson resigned his office. The doom of the convention was chiefly brought about by the efforts of Mr. Charles Sumner, a leading member of the Senate of the United States. Mr. Sumner was a man of remarkable force of character, a somewhat 'masterful' temperament, to use an expressive provincial word, a temperament corresponding with his great stature, his stately presence, and his singularly handsome and expressive face. Mr. Sumner had been for the greater part of his life an enthusiastic admirer of England and English institutions. He had made himself acquainted with England and Englishmen, and was a great favourite in English society. He was a warm friend of Mr. Cobden, Mr. Bright, the Duke of Argyll, and many other eminent English public men. He was particularly enthusiastic about England because of the manner in which she had emancipated her slaves and the emphatic terms in which English society always expressed its horror

of the system of slavery. When the American Civil War broke out he expected with full confidence to find the sympathies of England freely given to the side of the North. He was struck with amazement when he found that they were to so great an extent given to the South. But when he saw that the *Alabama* and other Southern cruisers had been built in England, manned in England, and allowed to leave our ports with apparently the applause of three-fourths of the representative men of England, his feelings towards this country underwent a sudden and a most complete change. He now persuaded himself that the sympathies of the English people were actually with slavery, and that England was resolved to lend her best help for the setting up of a slave-owning Republic to the destruction of the American Union.

Mr. Sumner was mistaken in concluding that love of slavery and hatred of the Union dictated the foolish things that were often said and the unrightful things that were sometimes done by England. His mind, however, became filled with a fervour of anger against England. The zeal of his cause ate him up. All his love for England turned into hate. During all his career, Mr. Sumner had been a professed lover of peace; had made peace his prevailing principle of action; and yet he now spoke and acted as if he were determined that there must be war between England and the United States. Mr. Sumner denounced the convention made by Mr. Reverdy Johnson with a force of argument and of passionate eloquence which would have borne down all opposition if the Senate had not already been almost unanimously with him. It is right to say that the particular convention agreed on between Lord Clarendon and Mr. Reverdy Johnson does not seem to have been one that the American Senate could reasonably be expected to accept, or that could possibly give satisfaction to the American people. The defect of this convention was that it made the whole question a mere matter of individual claims. It professed to have to deal with a number of personal and private claims of various kinds, pending since a former settlement in 1853—claims made on the one side by British subjects against the American Government, and on the other by American citizens against the English Government; and it proposed to throw in the *Alabama* claims with all the others, and have a convention for the general clearance of the whole account. The claim set up by the United States, on account of the cruise of

the *Alabama*, was first of all a national claim, and this way of dealing with it could not possibly satisfy the American people.

The English Government wisely gave way. They consented to send out a commission to Washington to confer with an American Commission, and to treat the whole question in dispute as national and not merely individual. The Commission was to enter upon all the various subjects of dispute unsettled between England and the United States; the *Alabama* claims, the San Juan Boundary, and the Canadian Fishery Question. The Dominion of Canada was to be represented on the Commission. The English Commissioners were Earl de Grey and Ripon (afterwards created Marquis of Ripon, in return for his services at Washington), Sir Stafford Northcote, Mr. Mountague Bernard, Professor of International Law at the University of Oxford; and Sir Edward Thornton, English Minister at Washington. Sir John A. Macdonald represented Canada. The American Commissioners were Mr. Hamilton Fish, Secretary of State; General Schenck, afterwards American Minister in England; Mr. J. C. Bancroft Davis, Mr. Justice Nelson, Mr. Justice Williams, and Mr. E. R. Hoar.

The Commissioners held a long series of meetings in Washington, and at length arrived at a basis of arbitration. The Treaty of Washington acknowledged the international character of the dispute, and it opened with the remarkable announcement that 'Her Britannic Majesty has authorised her High Commissioners and Plenipotentiaries to express, in a friendly spirit, the regret felt by Her Majesty's Government for the escape, under whatever circumstances, of the *Alabama* and other vessels from British ports, and for the depredations committed by those vessels.' This very unusual acknowledgment ought not in itself to be considered as anything of a humiliation. But when compared with the stand which English Ministers had taken not many years before, this was indeed a considerable change of attitude. It is not surprising that many Englishmen chafed at the appearance of submission which it presented. The Treaty then laid down three rules. These rules were: 'A neutral Government is bound: first, to use due diligence to prevent the fitting-out, arming, or equipping, within its jurisdiction, of any vessel which it has reasonable ground to believe is intended to cruise or to carry on war against a Power with which it is at peace, and also to use like

diligence to prevent the departure from its jurisdiction of any vessel intended to cruise or carry on war as above, such vessel having been specially adapted in whole or in part, within such jurisdiction, to warlike use. Secondly, not to permit or suffer either belligerent to make use of its ports or waters as the base of naval operations against the other, or for the purpose of the renewal or augmentation of military supplies or arms, or the recruitment of men. Thirdly, to exercise due diligence in its own ports and waters, and as to all persons within its jurisdiction, to prevent any violation of the foregoing obligations and duties.'

The British Commissioners followed up the acceptance of these three rules by a saving clause, declaring that the English Government could not assent to them as a 'statement of principles of international law which were in force at the time when the claims arose;' but that 'in order to evince its desire of strengthening the friendly relations between the two countries, and of making satisfactory provision for the future,' it agreed that in deciding the questions arising out of the claims these principles should be accepted, 'and the high contracting parties agree to observe these rules between themselves in future, and to bring them to the knowledge of other maritime Powers, and to invite them to accede to them.' The Treaty then provided for the settlement of the *Alabama* claims by a tribunal of five arbitrators, one to be appointed by the Queen, and the others respectively by the President of the United States, the King of Italy, the President of the Swiss Confederation, and the Emperor of Brazil. This tribunal was to meet in Geneva, and was to decide by a majority all the questions submitted to it. The Treaty further provided for a tribunal to settle what may be called individual claims on either side, and another commission to meet afterwards at Halifax, Nova Scotia, and deal with the Fishery Question, an old outstanding dispute as to the reciprocal rights of British and American subjects to fish on each other's coasts. It referred the question of the northern boundary between the British North American territories and the United States to the arbitration of the German Emperor. It also opened the navigation of the St. Lawrence and other rivers.

Some delay was caused in the meeting of the tribunal of arbitration at Geneva by the sudden presentation on the part of the American Government of what were called the indirect claims. To the surprise of everybody, the American case

when presented was found to include claims for vast and indeed almost limitless damages, for indirect losses alleged to be caused by the cruise of the *Alabama* and the other vessels. The loss by the transfer of trade to English vessels, the loss by increased rates of insurance, and all imaginable losses incident to the prolongation of the war, were now made part of the American claims. It was clear that if such a principle were admitted there was no possible reason why the claims should not include every dollar spent in the whole operations of the war and in supplying any of the war's damages, from the first day when the *Alabama* put to sea. Even men like Mr. Bright, who had been devoted friends of the North during the war, protested against this insufferable claim. It was indeed a profound mistake. The arbitration was on the point of being broken off. The excitement in England was intense. The American Government had at last to withdraw the claims. The Geneva arbitrators of their own motion declared that all such claims were invalid and contrary to international law.

The decision of the Geneva Tribunal went against England. The court were unanimous in finding England responsible for the acts of the *Alabama*. A majority found her responsible for the acts of the *Florida* and for some of those of the *Shenandoah*, but not responsible for those of other vessels. They awarded a sum of about three millions and a quarter sterling as compensation for all losses and final settlement of all claims including interest. The German Emperor decided in favour of the American claim to the small island of San Juan, near Vancouver's Island, a question remaining unsettled since the Oregon Treaty. San Juan had for years been in a somewhat hazardous condition of joint occupation by England and the United States. It was evacuated by England, in consequence of the award, at the close of November 1873.

The principle of arbitration had not thus far worked in a manner calculated greatly to delight the English people. In each case the award had gone decidedly against them. No doubt it had gone against them because the right of each case was against them; and those who submit to arbitration have no business to complain because the decision is not given in their favour. However that may be, it is certain that the effect of the Geneva arbitration was to create a sore and angry feeling among Englishmen in general. The feeling found expression with some; smouldered in sullenness with others.

It was unreasonable and unjust; but it was not altogether unnatural; and it had its effect on the popularity of Mr. Gladstone's Government.

The opening of the Session of 1872 was made melancholy by the announcement that Lord Mayo, the Viceroy of India, had been killed by a fanatical assassin in a convict settlement, on one of the Andaman Islands which the Viceroy was inspecting. Lord Mayo had borne himself well in his difficult position, and had won the admiration of men of all parties by his firmness, his energy, his humanity and his justice.

CHAPTER XXV.

THE FALL OF THE GREAT ADMINISTRATION.

THE Liberal Ministry continued somehow to fall off in popularity. Mr. Gladstone was profoundly serious in his purposes of reform; and very serious men are seldom popular in a society like that of London. The long series of bold and vigorous reforms was undoubtedly causing the public to lose its breath. The inevitable reaction was setting in. No popularity, no skill, no cunning in the management of men, no quality or endowment on the part of the Prime Minister, could have wholly prevented that result. Mr. Gladstone was not cunning in the management of men. He would probably have despised himself for availing of such a craft had he possessed it. He showed his feelings too plainly. If men displeased him he seldom took the trouble to conceal his displeasure. It was murmured among his followers that he was dictatorial; and no doubt he was dictatorial in the sense that he had strong purposes himself, and was earnest in trying to press them upon other men. His very religious opinions served to interfere with his social popularity. He seemed to be a curious blending of the English High Churchman and the Scottish Presbyterian. He displeased the ordinary English middle class by leaning too much to Ritualism; and on the other hand, he often offended the Roman Catholics by his impassioned diatribes against the Pope and the Church of Rome. One or two appointments made by or under the authority of Mr. Gladstone gave occasion to considerable controversy and to something like scandal. One of these was

the appointment of the Attorney-General, Sir Robert Collier, to a Puisne Judgeship of the Court of Common Pleas, in order technically to qualify him for a seat on the bench of a new Court of Appeal—that is to say, to become one of the paid members of the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council. The statute required that every judge of the Court of Appeal should have been a judge of one of the ordinary courts; and Sir Robert Collier was passed through the Court of Common Pleas in order that he might have the technical qualification. There was not the slightest suggestion of any improper motive on the part of Mr. Gladstone, or lack of legal or judicial fitness on the part of Sir Robert Collier. On the contrary, it was admitted that Sir Robert Collier had helped the Government out of a difficulty by taking an appointment which several judges had declined, and which had not quite such a position as the traditions of his office would have entitled him to expect. It seemed, however, as if there was something of a trick in the act which thus passed him through the one court in order to give him a technical qualification for the other. A vote of censure on the Government was moved in the House of Lords, and the universal impression was that it would be carried. The vote of censure was, however, rejected by eighty-nine against eighty-seven. A similar attempt was made in the House of Commons, and was defeated; only however by a majority of twenty-seven, a small majority in the House where the strength of the Government was supposed to lie. There can be no doubt that, although in neither House of Parliament could any expression of censure be obtained, the 'Colliery explosion,' as it was called, gave a downward push to the declining popularity of Mr. Gladstone's administration.

The 'liquor interest' too was soon in arms against him. The United Kingdom Alliance 'for the suppression of the liquor traffic' had of late years been growing so strong as to become a positive influence in politics. Its object was to bring about the adoption of legislation which should leave it in the power of a two-thirds majority in each locality to stop altogether, if it were so thought fit, the public sale of intoxicating drinks. The Parliamentary leader of the agitation was Sir Wilfrid Lawson, a man of position, of great energy, and of thorough earnestness. Sir Wilfrid Lawson was not, however, merely energetic and earnest. He had a peculiarly effective style of speaking, curiously unlike that which might

be expected from the advocate of an austere and somewhat fanatical sort of legislation. He was a humorist of a fresh and vigorous order, and he always took care to amuse his listeners and never allowed his speeches to bore them. The Alliance was always urging on the Government and public opinion against the drink traffic, and it became clear that something must be done to regulate the trade. Mr. Bruce, the Home Secretary, brought in a Bill which the Alliance condemned as feebleness, and which the publicans resented as oppression. The Bill increased the penalties for drunkenness, and shortened the hours during which public-houses might be kept open on Sundays and on week days as well. The effect of the passing of this measure was to throw the publicans into open hostility to the Government. The publicans were a numerous body; they were well organised; the network of their trade and their Association spread all over the kingdom. The hostile feelings of some were perhaps not unnaturally embittered by the fact that many speakers and writers treated all publicans alike, made no distinction between the reputable and the disreputable, though it was well known that a large proportion of the publicans carried on a respectable trade, and were losers rather than gainers by drunkenness. The natural result of indiscriminate attack was to cause an indiscriminate alliance for the purposes of defence.

The establishment of a republic in France could not be without its influence on English politics. A certain amount of more or less vague republican sentiment is always afloat on the surface of English radicalism. The establishment of the French Republic now came as a climax. At many of the great meetings which were held in London, and in most of the English cities, to express sympathy with the struggling republic a good deal of very outspoken republicanism made itself heard. There could be no doubt that a considerable proportion of the working men in the cities were republicans in sentiment. English writers who were not by any means of sentimental school, but on the contrary were somewhat hard and cold in their dogmatism, began to publish articles in 'advanced' reviews and magazines, distinctly pointing out the logical superiority of the republican theory. Men were already discussing the possibility of a declared republican party being formed both in and out of Parliament; not indeed a party clamouring for the instant pulling down of the monarchy; no one thought of that; but a party which would avow itself

republican in principle, and acknowledge that its object was to bring about a change in public sentiment which might prepare the way for a republic in the time to come. But France, which had given the impulse, gave also the shock that brought reaction. The wild theories, the monstrous excesses, the preposterous theatricism, of the Paris Commune had a very chilling effect on the ardour of English republicans. The movement in England had, however, one or two curious episodes before it sank into quiescence.

In March 1872, Sir Charles Dilke brought on a motion, in the House of Commons, for inquiring into the manner in which the income and allowances of the Crown are expended. Sir Charles Dilke had been for some months of the preceding autumn the best abused man in Great Britain. His name appeared over and over again in the daily papers. The comic papers caricatured 'Citizen Dilke' every week. The telegraph-wires carried his doings and speeches everywhere. American correspondents 'interviewed' him, and pictured him as the future President of England. He went round the towns of the North of England, delivering a lecture on the expenses of royalty; and his progress was marked by more or less serious riots everywhere. Life was sacrificed in more than one of these tumults. The working men of London and of the North held great meetings to express their approval of his principles and conduct. To increase and perplex the excitement, the Prince of Wales fell ill, and if Sir Charles Dilke had personally caused his illness he could not have been more bitterly denounced by some speakers and writers. He was represented as a monster of disloyalty, who had chosen to assail the Queen (against whom it is only fair to say he had never uttered a disparaging word) while her eldest son lay struggling with death. The Prince of Wales, given over by all the doctors, recovered; and in the outburst of public gladness and loyalty that followed his restoration to health, Sir Charles Dilke was almost forgotten. But he had been challenged to repeat in the House of Commons the statements that he had made in the country. He answered the challenge by bringing forward the motion to inquire into the manner in which the income and allowances of the Crown were spent. There was unmistakeable courage in the cool, steady way in which he rose to propose his motion. Sir Charles Dilke knew that everyone in that House, save three or four alone, was bitterly opposed to him. It is a hard trial to the nerves to face such an audience. But neither then

nor after did he show the slightest sign of quailing. His speech was well got up as to facts, well arranged, and evidently well committed to memory, but it was not eloquent. The warmth of Mr. Gladstone's reply was almost startling by sheer force of contrast to Sir Charles Dilke's quiet, dry, and laboured style. No one expected that Mr. Gladstone would be so passionately merciless as he proved to be. His vehemence, forcing the House into hot temper again, was one cause at least of the extraordinary tumult that arose when Sir Charles Dilke's friend and ally, Mr. Auberon Herbert, rose to speak, and declared himself also a republican. This was the signal for as extraordinary a scene as the House of Commons has ever exhibited. The tumult became so great, that if it had taken place at any public meeting, it would have been called a riot, and would have required the interference of the police. Some hundreds of strong, excited, furious men were shouting and yelling with the object of interrupting the speech and drowning the voice of one man. The Speaker of the House of Commons is usually an omnipotent authority. But on this occasion the Speaker was literally powerless. There was no authority which could overawe that House. Men of education and position—university men, younger sons of peers, great landowners, officers in crack cavalry regiments, the very *élite*, many of them, of the English aristocracy, became for the moment a merely furious mob. They roared, hissed, gesticulated; the shrill 'cock-crow,' unheard in the House of Commons for a whole generation, shrieked once more in the ears of the bewildered officials.

It was clear that there was no republican party, properly so called, in the country. Some of the 'philosophical Radicals,' who were most strongly republican in sentiment and conviction, declared in the most explicit words that they would not make the slightest effort to agitate in favour of a republic; that they did not think the difference between a republic and the British Constitution was worth the trouble of a long agitation. If a republic were to come, they said, it would come in good time. England could afford to wait. When this philosophical mood of mind prevailed among republicans it was clear that the question of a republic had not, as the phrase is, 'come up.'

A new figure did, however, arise about that time in English politics. It was that of the English agricultural labourer as a political agitator and member of a trades-union. For years and years the working man in cities had played an

influential part in every agitation. All the while the rural labourer was supposed to be entirely out of the play. No one troubled about him. Sometimes a London newspaper sent down a special correspondent to explore the condition of some village, and he wrote back descriptions which made the flesh creep about the miseries of some labourer's family of eight or nine who habitually slept in one room, and in not a few instances in one bed. That was the rural labourer at his worst. At his best he seemed a picture of hard-working, cleanly, patient, and almost hopeless poverty. Mr. Disraeli and the Tory landlords said he was too contented and happy to need a change; most other people thought that he was rendered too stolid by the monotonous misery of his condition. Suddenly in the spring of 1872, not long after the opening of Parliament, vague rumours began to reach London of a movement of some kind among the labourers of South Warwickshire. It was first reported that they had asked for an increase of wages, then that they were actually forming a labourers' union, after the pattern of the artisans; then that they were on strike. There came accounts of meetings of rural labourers—meetings positively where men made speeches. Instantly the London papers sent down their special correspondents, and for weeks the movement among the agricultural labourers of South Warwickshire—the country of Shakespeare—became the sensation of London. How the thing first came about is not very clear. But it seems that in one of the South Warwickshire villages, when there was sad and sullen talk of starvation, it occurred to someone to suggest a 'strike' against the landlords. The thing took fire somehow. A few men accepted it at once. In the neighbouring village was a man who, although only a day labourer, had been long accustomed to act as a volunteer preacher of Methodism, and who by his superior intelligence, his good character, and his effective way of talking, had acquired a great influence among his fellows. This man was Joseph Arch. He was consulted and he approved of the notion. He was asked if he would get together a meeting and make a speech, and he consented. Calling a meeting of day labourers then was almost as bold a step as proclaiming a revolution. Yet it was done somehow. There were no circulars, no placards, none of the machinery which we all associate with the getting up of a meeting. The news had to be passed on by word of mouth that a meeting was to be held and where; the incredulous had to be convinced that

there was really to be a meeting, the timid had to be prevailed on to take courage and go. The meeting was held under a great chestnut tree, which thereby acquired a sort of fame. There a thousand labourers came together and were addressed by Joseph Arch. He carried them all with him. His one great idea—great and bold to them, simple and small to us—was to form a labourers' union like the trades-unions of the cities. The idea was taken up with enthusiasm. New branches were formed every day. Arch kept on holding meetings and addressing crowds. The whole movement passed, naturally and necessarily, into his hands. How completely it was a rural labourers' movement, how little help or guidance it received in its origin from other sources, how profoundly isolated from the outer and active world was its scene, may be understood from the fact that it was nearly six weeks in action before its very existence was known in London. Then the special correspondents went down to the spot, and turned a blaze of light on it. Mr. Auberon Herbert and other active reformers appeared on the scene and threw themselves into the movement. Meetings were held in various villages, and Mr. Arch found himself in the constant companionship of members of Parliament, leaders of political organisations, and other unwonted associates. The good sense of the sturdy labourer never forsook the leader of the movement, nor did he ever show any inclination to subordinate his enterprise to any political agitation. The labourers took the help of political leaders so far as the mere conduct of the organisation was concerned, but they did not show any inclination to allow their project to expand as yet beyond its simple and natural limits. On the other hand, it was clear that, so far as the labourers had any political sympathies, they were with Liberalism and against Toryism. This too was a little surprise for the public. Most persons had supposed that a race of beings brought up for generations under the exclusive tutorship of the landlord, the vicar, and the wives of the landlords and the vicars, would have had any political tendencies they possessed drilled and drummed into the grooves of Toryism. The shock of surprise with which the opposite idea impressed itself upon the minds of the Conservative squires found ready and angry expression. The landlords in most places declared themselves against the movement of the labourers. Some of them denounced it in unmeasured language. Mr. Disraeli at once sprang to the front as the champion of feudal aristocracy

and the British country squire. The controversy was taken up in the House of Commons, and served, if it did nothing else, to draw all the more attention to the condition of the British labourer.

One indirect but necessary result of the agitation was to remind the public of the injustice done to the rural population when they were left unenfranchised at the time of the passing of the last Reform Bill. The injustice was strongly pressed upon the Government, and Mr. Gladstone frankly acknowledged that it would be impossible to allow things to remain long in their anomalous state. In truth when the Reform Bill was passed nobody supposed that the rural population were capable of making any use of a vote. Therefore the movement which began in Warwickshire took two directions when the immediate effects of the partial strike were over. A permanent union of labourers was formed corresponding generally in system with the organisations of the cities. The other direction was distinctly political. The rural population through their leaders joined with the reformers of the cities for the purpose of obtaining an equal franchise in town and country; in other words, for the enfranchisement of the peasantry. The emancipation of the rural labourers began when the first meeting answered the appeals of Joseph Arch. The rough and ready peasant preacher had probably little idea, when he made his speech under the chestnut tree, that he was speaking the first words of a new chapter of the country's history.

A few lines ought perhaps to be spared to one of the most remarkable instances of disputed identity on record. A claim was suddenly made upon the Tichborne baronetcy and estates by a man who came from Australia and who announced himself as the heir to the title and the property. He declared that he was the Sir Roger Tichborne who was supposed to have gone down with the wreck of the *Bella*, sailing from Rio in South America years before. 'The Claimant' was curiously unlike what people remembered Roger Tichborne, not only in face but in figure and in manners. A slender, delicate, somewhat feeble young man, of fair although not finished education, who had always lived in good society and showed it in his language and bearing, went down in the *Bella*, or at least disappeared with her; and thirteen years afterwards there came from Australia a man of enormous bulk, ignorant to an almost inconceivable degree of ignorance, and who if he were Roger

Tichborne had not only forgotten all the manners of his class but had forgotten the very names of many of those with whom he ought to have been most familiar, including the name of his own mother; and this man presented himself as the lost heir and claimed the property. Yet it is certain that his story was believed by the mother of Roger Tichborne, and by a considerable number of persons of undoubted veracity and intelligence who had known Roger Tichborne in his youth. He utterly failed to make out his claim in a Court of Law. It was shown upon the clearest evidence that he had gradually put together and built up around him a whole system of imposture. He was then put on trial for his frauds, found guilty, and sentenced to fourteen years' penal servitude. Yet thousands of ignorant persons, and some persons not at all ignorant, continued, and to this day continue, to believe in him.

On January 9, 1873, Louis Napoleon, late Emperor of the French, died at his house in Chislehurst, Kent. After the overthrow of the Empire, the fallen Emperor came to England. He settled with his wife and son at Chislehurst, and lived in dignified semi-retirement. The Emperor became a sort of favourite with the public here. A reaction seemed to have set in against the dread and dislike with which he had at one time been regarded. He enjoyed a certain amount of popularity. Louis Napoleon had for a long time been in sinking health. His life had been overwrought in every way. He had lived many lives in a comparatively short space of time. Most of his friends had long been expecting his death from week to week, almost from day to day. The event created no great sensation. Perhaps even the news of his death was but an anti-climax after the news of his fall. For twenty years he had filled a space in the eyes of the world with which the importance of no man else could pretend to compare. His political bulk had towered up in European affairs like some huge castle dominating over a city. All the earth listened to the lightest word he spoke. For good or evil his influence and his name were potent in every corner of the globe. His nod convulsed continents. His arms glittered from the Crimea to Cochin-China, from Algeria to Mexico. The whole condition of things seemed changed when Louis Napoleon fell at Sedan. Some forty years of wandering, of obscurity, of futile, almost ludicrous enterprises, of exile, of imprisonment, of the world's contempt, and then twenty years of splendid success, of supreme sovereignty, had led him to

this—to the disgrace of Sedan, to the quiet fading days of Chislehurst.

Death was very busy about this time with men whose names had made deep mark on history or letters. Lord Lytton, the brilliant novelist, the successful dramatist, the composer of marvellous Parliamentary speeches, died on January 18, 1873. Dr. Livingstone, the famous missionary and explorer, had hardly been discovered among the living by the enterprise and energy of Mr. Stanley, when the world learned that he was dead. So many false reports of his death had been sent about at different times that the statement now was received with incredulity. The truth had to be confirmed on testimony beyond dispute before England would accept the fact that the long career of devotion to the one pursuit was over, and that Africa had had another victim. John Stuart Mill died on May 8, 1873, at his home at Avignon, where the tomb of his wife was made. 'There's a great spirit gone,' was the word of all men. A loftier and purer soul, more truly devoted to the quest of the truth, had not mingled in the worldly affairs of our time. His influence over the thought and the culture of his day was immense. Most of Mr. Mill's writings may safely be regarded as the possession of all the future, and he has left an example of candour in investigation and fearless moral purpose in action such as might well leaven even the most thoughtless and cynical generation. A sudden accident, the stumble of a horse, brought to a close, on July 19, the career of the Bishop of Winchester, the many-sided, energetic, eloquent Samuel Wilberforce. He had tried to succeed in everything, and he went near success. He tried to know everybody, and understand everybody's way of looking at every question. He was a great preacher and Parliamentary orator, a great bishop, a wit, a scholar, an accomplished man of the world; but he was a good man and good minister always. On the very day after the death of the Bishop of Winchester died Lord Westbury, who had been Lord Chancellor, a man of great ability, unsurpassed as a lawyer in his time, endowed with as bitter a tongue and as vitriolic a wit as ever cursed their possessor. The deaths of Sir Edwin Landseer, the painter, Sir Henry Holland, the famous physician and traveller, whose patients and personal friends were Emperors, Kings, Presidents, and Prime Ministers, and of Professor Sedgwick, the geologist, ought to be mentioned. Nor must we omit from our death-

roll the name of Dr. Lushington, who, in addition to his own personal distinction, is likely to be remembered as the depositary of a secret confided to him in an earlier generation by Lady Byron, the secret of the charge she had to make against her husband. The whole story was revived before Dr. Lushishgton's death by a painful controversy, but he refused even by a yes or no to reveal Lady Byron's confidence.

The year which saw so many deaths was a trying time for the Liberal Government. The novelty of the reforming administration was well-nigh worn off, and there was yet some work which Mr. Gladstone was pledged to do. Here and there, when it happened that the death or retirement of a member of Parliament gave an opportunity for a new election, it seemed of late to happen that the election went generally against the Government. The Conservatives were plucking up a spirit everywhere, and were looking closely after their organisation. Mr. Disraeli himself had taken to going round the country, addressing great assemblages and denouncing and ridiculing the Liberal Government. In one of his speeches, Mr. Disraeli had spoken of a new difficulty in Irish politics and a new form of agitation that had arisen in Ireland. The Home Rule organisation had sprung suddenly into existence.

The Home Rule agitation came, in its first organised form, mainly from the inspiration of Irish Protestants. The disestablishment of the Church had filled most of the Protestants of Ireland with hatred of Mr. Gladstone, and distrust of the Imperial Parliament and English parties. It was therefore thought by some of them that the time had come when Irishmen of all sects and parties had better trust to themselves and to their united efforts than to any English Minister, Parliament, or party. Partly in a petulant mood, partly in despondency, partly out of genuine patriotic impulse, some of the Irish Protestants set going the movement for Home Rule. But although the actual movement came into being in that way, the desire for a native Parliament had always lived among large classes of the Irish people. Attempts were always being made to construct something like a regular organisation with such an object. The process of pacification was going on but slowly. It could only be slow in any case; the effects of centuries of bad legislation could not by any human possibility be effaced by two or three years of better government. But there were many Irishmen who, them-

selves patient and moderate, saw with distinctness that the feeling of disaffection, or at least of discontent, among the Irish people was not to be charmed away even by such measures as the Disestablishment of the Irish Church. They saw what English statesmen would not or could not see, that the one strong feeling in the breast of a large proportion of the population of Ireland was dislike to the rule of an English Parliament. The national sentiment, rightly or wrongly, for good or ill, had grown so powerful that it could not be overcome by mere concessions in this or that detail of legislation. These Irishmen of moderate views felt convinced that there were only two alternatives before England; either she must give back to Ireland some form of national Parliament, or she must go on putting down rebellion after rebellion, and dealing with Ireland as Russia had dealt with Poland. They therefore welcomed the Home Rule movement, and conscientiously believed that it would open the way to a genuine reconciliation between England and Ireland on conditions of fair co-partnership.

Several Irish elections took place about the time when the Home Rule movement had been fairly started. They were fought out on the question for or against Home Rule; and the Home Rulers were successful. The leadership of the new party came into the hands of Mr. Butt, who returned to Parliament after a considerable time of exile from political life. Mr. Butt was a man of great ability, legal knowledge, and historical culture. He had begun life as a Conservative and an opponent of O'Connell. He had become one of the orators of the short-lived attempt at a Protectionist reaction in England. He was a lawyer of great skill and success in his profession; as an advocate he had for years not a rival at the Irish bar. He had taken part in the defence of Smith O'Brien and Meagher at Clonmel, in 1848; and when the Fenian movements broke out, he undertook the defence of many Fenian prisoners. He became gradually drawn away from Conservatism and brought round to Nationalism. Mr. Butt dropped entirely out of public life for a while; and when he reappeared it was as the leader of the new Home Rule movement. There was not then in Irish politics any man who could pretend to be his rival. He was a speaker at once powerful and plausible; he had a thorough knowledge of the constitutional history and the technical procedures of Parliament, and he could talk to an Irish monster meeting

with vivacity and energy. Almost in a moment a regular Home Rule party was set up in the House of Commons. Popular Irish members who had been elected previous to the organisation of the movement gave in their adhesion to it; and there was in fact a sudden revival of the constitutional movement for the satisfaction of Irish national claims which had fallen asleep after the death of O'Connell and the failure of the Young Ireland rebellion of 1848.

The Home Rule movement unquestionably put Mr. Gladstone in a new difficulty. It was now certain that when Parliament met, an organised Home Rule party would be found there; and a good many strong Conservatives and weak Liberals were inclined to hold Mr. Gladstone's Irish policy responsible for the uprise of this new agitation. The prospects were on the whole growing somewhat ominous for the Liberal Government. Not only the Conservative party were plucking up a spirit, but the House of Lords had more than once made it clear that they felt themselves emboldened to deal as they thought fit with measures sent up to them from the House of Commons. When the peers begin to be firm and to assert their dignity, it may always be taken for granted that there is not much popular force at the back of the Government.

Parliament met on February 6, 1873. It is a remarkable illustration of the legislative energy with which the Government were even yet filled, that on the very same night (February 13), at the very same hour, two great schemes of reform, reform that to slow and timid minds must have seemed something like revolution, were introduced into Parliament. One was the Irish University Education Bill, which Mr. Gladstone was explaining in the House of Commons; the other was a measure to abolish the appellate jurisdiction of the House of Lords, and establish a judicial Court of Appeal in its stead. This latter measure was introduced by Lord Selborne, lately Sir Roundell Palmer, who had been raised to the office of Lord Chancellor, on the resignation of Lord Hatherley, whose eyesight was temporarily affected. Great as the change was which Lord Selborne proposed to introduce, public attention paid comparatively little heed to it at that moment. Everyone watched with eager interest the development of Mr. Gladstone's most critical scheme for the improvement of university education in Ireland. Irish university education was indeed in a very anomalous condition. Ireland had two universities: that of Dublin, which was then

a distinctly Protestant institution; and the Queen's University, which was established on a strictly secular system, and which the heads of the Catholic Church had on that account condemned. The Catholics asked for a chartered Catholic university. The answer made by most Englishmen was, that to grant a charter to a Catholic university would be to run the risk of lowering the national standard of education, and that to grant any State aid to a Catholic university would be to endow a sectarian institution out of the public funds. The Catholic made rejoinder that a mere speculative dread of lowering the common standard of university education was hardly a reason why five-sixths of the population of Ireland should have no university education of that kind at all; that the University of Dublin was in essence a State-endowed institution; and that the Queen's University was founded by State money, on a principle which excluded the vast majority of Catholics from its advantages.

Mr. Gladstone's measure was a gallant and a well-meant effort to reconcile the conflicting claims. Mr. Gladstone proposed to establish in Ireland one central university, the University of Dublin, to which existing colleges and colleges to exist hereafter might affiliate themselves, and in the governing of which they would have a share, while each college would make what laws it pleased for its own constitution, and might be denominational or undenominational as it thought fit. The Legislature would give an open career and fair play to all alike; and in order to make the University equally applicable to every sect, it would not teach disputed branches of knowledge, or allow its examinations for prizes to include any of the disputed questions. The colleges could act for themselves with regard to the teaching of theology, moral philosophy, and modern history; the central University would maintain a neutral ground so far as these subjects were concerned, and would have nothing to do with them. This scheme looked plausible and even satisfactory for a moment. It was met that first night with something like a chorus of approval from those who spoke. But there was an ominous silence in many parts of the House; and after a while the ominous silence began to be very alarmingly broken. The more the scheme was examined the less it seemed to find favour on either side of the House. It proposed to break up and fuse together three or four existing systems, and apparently without the least prospect of satisfying any of the

various sects and parties to compose whose strife this great revolution was to be attempted. There was great justice in the complaint that soon began to be heard from both sides of the House of Commons: 'You are spoiling several institutions, and you are not satisfying the requirements of anybody whatever.'

The agitation against the bill grew and grew. The late Professor Cairnes, then in fast failing health, inspired and guided much of that part of the opposition which condemned the measure because of the depreciating effect it would have on the character of the higher education of Ireland. The English Nonconformists were all against it. The Conservatives were against it, and it soon became evident that the Irish members of Parliament would vote as a body against it. The crisis came on an amendment to the motion for the second reading. The amendment was moved on March 3 by Mr. Bourke, brother of the late Lord Mayo. The debate, which lasted four nights, was brilliant and impassioned. Mr. Disraeli was exulting, and his exultation lent even more than usual spirit to his glittering eloquence as he taunted Mr. Gladstone with having mistaken 'the clamour of the Nonconformist for the voice of the nation,' and declared his belief that the English people were weary of the policy of confiscation.

When Mr. Gladstone rose to speak at the close of the fourth night's debate it soon became evident that he no longer counted on victory. How, indeed, could he? He was opposed and assailed from all sides. He knew that the Senate of the University of Dublin had condemned his measure as well as the Roman Catholic prelates. He had received a deputation of Irish members to announce to him frankly that they could not support him. His speech was in remarkable contrast to the jubilant tones of Mr. Disraeli's defiant and triumphant rhetoric. It was full of dignity and resolve; but it was the dignity of anticipated defeat met without shrinking and without bravado. A few sentences, in which Mr. Gladstone spoke of his severance from the Irish representatives with whom he had worked cordially and successfully on the Church and Land Bills, were full of a genuine and a noble pathos. Mr. Gladstone was the first English Prime Minister who had ever really perilled office and popularity to serve the interests of Ireland; it seemed a cruel stroke of fate which made his fall from power mainly the result of the Irish vote in the House of Commons. The result of the division was waited with

breathless anxiety. It was what had been expected. The ministry had been defeated by a small majority; 287 had voted against the second reading, 284 voted for it. By a majority of three the great Liberal administration was practically overthrown.

The ministry did not indeed come to an end just then. Mr. Gladstone and his colleagues resigned office, and the Queen sent for Mr. Disraeli. But Mr. Disraeli prudently declined to accept office with the existing House of Commons. He had been carefully studying the evidences of Conservative reaction, and he felt sure that the time for his party was coming. He had had bitter experience of the humiliation of a minister who tries to govern without a majority in the House of Commons. He could of course form a government, he said, and dissolve in May; but then he had nothing in particular to dissolve about. The situation was curious. There were two great statesmen disputing, not for office, but how to get out of the responsibility of office. The result was that Mr. Gladstone and his colleagues had to return to their places and go on as best they could. There was nothing else to be done. Mr. Disraeli would not accept responsibility just then, and with regard to the interests of his party he was acting like a prudent man. Mr. Gladstone returned to office. He returned reluctantly; he was weary of the work; he was disappointed; he had suffered in health from the incessant administrative labour to which he had always subjected himself with an unsparing and almost improvident magnanimity. He must have known that, coming back to office under such conditions, he would find his power shaken, his influence much discredited. He bent to the necessities of the time, and consented to be Prime Minister still. He helped Mr. Fawcett to carry a bill for the abolition of tests in Dublin University, as he could do no more just then for university education in Ireland.

The end was near. During the autumn some elections happening incidentally turned out against the Liberal party. The Conservatives were beginning to be openly triumphant in most places. Mr. Gladstone made some modifications in his ministry. Mr. Lowe gave up the Chancellorship of the Exchequer, in which he had been singularly unsuccessful; Mr. Bruce left the Home Office, in which he had not been much of a success. Mr. Gladstone took upon himself the offices of First Lord of the Treasury and Chancellor of the

Exchequer together, following an example set in former days by Peel and other statesmen. Mr. Lowe became Home Secretary. Mr. Bruce was raised to the peerage as Lord Aberdare, and was made President of the Council in the room of the Marquis of Ripon, who had resigned. Mr. Childers resigned the office of Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, and Mr. Bright, whose health had now been restored, came back to the Cabinet in charge of the merely nominal business of the Duchy. There could be no doubt that there were dissensions in the ministry. Mr. Baxter had resigned the office of Secretary of the Treasury on the ground that he could not get on with Mr. Lowe, who had not consulted him with regard to certain contracts, and had refused to take his advice. The general impression was that Mr. Childers gave up the Chancellorship of the Duchy because he considered that he had claims on the office of Chancellor of the Exchequer, which Mr. Gladstone now had taken to himself. These various changes and the rumours to which they gave birth were not calculated to strengthen the public confidence. In truth, the Liberal *régime* was falling to pieces.

But it was Mr. Gladstone himself who dealt the stroke which brought the Liberal Administration to an end. In the closing days of 1873 the Conservatives won a seat at Exeter; in the first few days of 1874 they won a seat at Stroud. Parliament had actually been summoned for February 5. Suddenly, on January 23, Mr. Gladstone made up his mind to dissolve Parliament, and seek for a restoration of the authority of the Liberal Government by an appeal to the people. The country was taken utterly by surprise. Many of Mr. Gladstone's own colleagues had not known what was to be done until the announcement was actually made. The feeling all over the three kingdoms was one of almost unanimous disapproval. Mr. Gladstone's sudden resolve was openly condemned as petulant and unstatesmanlike; it was privately grumbled at on various personal grounds. Mr. Gladstone had surprised the constituencies. We do not know whether the constituencies surprised Mr. Gladstone. They certainly surprised most persons, including themselves. The result of the elections was to upset completely the balance of power. In a few days the Liberal majority was gone. When the result of the polls came to be made up it was found that the Conservatives had a majority of about fifty, even on the calculation, far too favourable to the other side, which counted every Home

Ruler as a Liberal. Mr. Gladstone followed the example set by Mr. Disraeli six years before, and at once resigned office. The great reforming Liberal Administration was gone. The organising energy which had accomplished such marvels during three or four resplendent years had spent itself and was out of breath. The English constituencies had grown weary of the heroic, and would have a change. So sudden a fall from power had not up to that time been known in the modern political history of the country.

Had the Liberal Ministers consented to remain in power a few days, a very few, longer, they would have been able to announce the satisfactory conclusion of a very unsatisfactory war. The Ashantee war arose out of a sort of misunderstanding. The Ashantees are a very fierce and warlike tribe on the Gold Coast of Africa. They were at war with England in 1824, and in one instance they won an extraordinary victory over a British force of about 1,000 men, and carried home with them as a trophy the skull of the British Commander-in-Chief, Sir Charles M'Carthy. They were afterwards defeated, and a treaty of peace was concluded with them. In 1863 a war was begun against the Ashantees prematurely and rashly by the Governor of the Gold Coast Settlements, and it had to be abandoned owing to the ravages done by sickness among our men. In 1872 some Dutch possessions on the Gold Coast were transferred by purchase and arrangement of other kinds to England. The King of Ashantee claimed a tribute formerly allowed to him by the Dutch, and refused to evacuate the territory ceded to England. He attacked the Fantees, a tribe of very worthless allies of ours, and a straggling, harassing war began between him and our garrisons. The great danger was that if the Ashantees obtained any considerable success, or seeming success, even for a moment, all the surrounding tribes would make common cause with them. Sir Garnet Wolseley, who had commanded the successful expedition to the Red River region in 1870, was sent out to Ashantee. He had a very hard task to perform. Of course he could have no difficulty in fighting the Ashantees. The weapons and the discipline of the English army put all thought of serious battle out of the question. But the whole campaign had to be over and done within the limited range of the cooler months, or the heat would bring pestilence and fever into the field to do battle for the African King. Sir Garnet Wolseley and those who fought under him—

sailors, marines, and soldiers, did their work well. They defeated the Ashantees wherever they could get at them; they forced their way to Coomassie, compelled the King to come to terms, one of the conditions being the prohibition of human sacrifices, and they were able to leave the country within the appointed time. The success of the campaign was a question of days and almost of hours; and the victory was snatched out of the very jaws of approaching sun and fever. Sir Garnet Wolseley sailed from England on September 12, 1873, and returned to Portsmouth, having accomplished all his objects, on March 21, 1874.

CHAPTER XXVI.

LORD BEACONSFIELD.

Mr. Disraeli was not long in forming a Ministry. Lord Cairns became Lord Chancellor. Lord Derby was made Foreign Secretary, an appointment which gratified sober-minded men. Lord Salisbury was entrusted with the charge of the Indian Department. This too was an appointment which gave satisfaction outside the range of the Conservative party as well as within it. During his former administration of the India Office, Lord Salisbury had shown great ability and self-command, and he had acquired a reputation for firmness of character and large and liberal views. He was now and for some time after looked upon as the most rising man and the most high-minded politician on the Conservative side. The country was pleased to see that Mr. Disraeli made no account of the dislike that Lord Salisbury had evidently felt towards him at one time, and of the manner in which he had broken away from the Conservative Ministry at the time of the Reform Bill of 1867. Lord Carnarvon became Colonial Secretary. Mr. Cross, a Lancashire lawyer, who had never been in office of any kind before, was lifted into the position of Home Secretary. Mr. Gathorne Hardy was made Secretary for War, and Mr. Ward Hunt First Lord of the Admiralty. Sir Stafford Northcote, who had been trained to finance by Mr. Gladstone, accepted the office of Chancellor of the Exchequer. The Duke of Richmond as Lord President of the Council made a safe, inoffensive, and respectable leader of the Government in the House of Lords.

The Liberals seemed to have received a stunning blow. The whole party reeled under it, and did not appear capable for the moment of rallying against the shock. To accumulate the difficulties, Mr. Gladstone suddenly announced his intention of retiring from the position of leader of the Liberal party. This seemed the one step needed to complete the disorganisation of the party. The Opposition were for a while apparently not only without a leader but even without a policy, or a motive for existence. The Ministry had succeeded to a handsome surplus of nearly six millions. It would be hardly possible under such circumstances to bring in a budget which should be wholly unsatisfactory. Mr. Ward Hunt contrived indeed to get up a momentary scare about the condition of the navy. When introducing the Navy Estimates he talked in tones of ominous warning about his determination not to have a fleet on paper, or to put up with phantom ships. The words sent a wild thrill of alarm through the country. The sudden impression prevailed that Mr. Hunt had made a fearful discovery—had found out that the country had really no navy; that he would be compelled to set about constructing one out of hand. Mr. Ward Hunt, however, when pressed for an explanation, explained that he really meant nothing. It appeared that he had only been expressing his disapproval on abstract grounds of the maintenance of inefficient navies, and never meant to convey the idea that England's navy was not efficient, and the country breathed again.

Two new measures belonging to the same order disturbed for a while the calm which prevailed in Parliament now that the Conservatives had it all their own way, and the Liberals were crushed. One was the Bill for the abolition of Church Patronage in Scotland; the other, the Public Worship Bill for England. The Church Patronage Bill, which was introduced by the Government, took away the appointment of ministers in the Church of Scotland from lay patrons, and gave it to the congregation of the parish church, a congregation to consist of the communicants and 'such other adherents' as the Kirk Session, acting under the control of the General Assembly, might determine to allow. Such a measure might have prevented the great secession from the Church of Scotland under Dr. Chalmers in 1843; but it was useless for any purpose of reconciliation in 1874. Its introduction became of some present interest to the House of Commons, because it drew Mr. Gladstone into debate for the first time since the opening

nights of the session. He opposed the Bill, but of course in vain. Mr. Disraeli complimented him on his reappearance, and kindly expressed a hope that he would favour the House with his presence as often as possible; indeed, was quite friendly and patronising to his fallen rival.

The Bill for the Regulation of Public Worship was not a Government measure. It was introduced into the House of Lords by the Archbishop of Canterbury, and into the House of Commons by Mr. Russell Gurney. It was strongly disliked and publicly condemned by some members of the Cabinet; but after it had gone its way fairly towards success Mr. Disraeli showed a disposition to adopt it, and even to speak as if he had had the responsibility of it from the first. The bill illustrated a curious difficulty into which the Church of England had been brought, in consequence partly of its connection with the State. The influence of the Oxford movement had set thought stirring everywhere within the Church. It appealed to much that was philosophical, much that was artistic and æsthetic, and at the same time to much that was sceptical. One body of Churchmen, the Tractarians as they were called, were anxious to maintain the unity of the Christian Church, and would not admit that the Church of England began to exist with the Reformation. They claimed apostolical succession for their bishops; they declared that the clergymen of the Church of England were priests in the true spiritual sense. The Evangelicals maintained that the Bible was the sole authority; the Tractarians held that the New Testament derived its authority from the Church. The Tractarians therefore claimed a right to examine very freely into the meaning of doubtful passages in the Scriptures, and insisted that if the authority of the Church were recognised as that of the Heaven-appointed interpreter, all difficulty about the reconciliation of the scriptural writings with the discoveries of modern science would necessarily disappear. The Tractarian party became divided into two sections. One section inclined towards what may almost be called free thought; the other, to the sentiments and the ceremonies of the Roman Catholic Church. The astonished Evangelicals saw with dismay that the Church as they knew it seemed likely to be torn asunder. The Evangelicals had their strongest supporters among the middle and the lower-middle classes; the others found favour at once among the rich, who went in for culture, and among the very

poor. The law, which was often invoked, proved impotent to deal with the difficulty. It was found impossible to put down Ritualism by law. The law was not by any means so clear as some of the opponents of Ritualism would have wished it. Moreover, even in cases where a distinct condemnation was obtained from a court of law there was often no way of putting it into execution. In more than one case a clergyman was actually deposed by authority, and his successor appointed. The congregation held fast by the delinquent and would not admit the new man. The offender remained at his post just as if nothing had happened. It was clear that if all this went on much longer, the Establishment must come to an end. One party would renounce State control in order to get freedom; another would repudiate State control because it proved unable to maintain authority.

To remedy all this disorder, the Archbishop of Canterbury brought in his bill. Its object was to give offended parishioners a ready way of invoking the authority of the bishop, and to enable the bishop to prohibit by his own mandate any practices which he considered improper, or else to submit the question to the decision of a judge specially appointed to decide in such cases. The discussions were remarkable for the divisions of opinion they showed on both sides of the House. Lord Salisbury opposed the Bill in the House of Lords; Mr. Hardy condemned it in the House of Commons. It was condemned as too weak; it was denounced as too strong. Mr. Gladstone came forward with all the energy of his best days to oppose it, on the ground that it threatened to deprive the Church of all her spiritual freedom merely to get a more easy way of dealing with the practices of a few eccentric men. Sir William Harcourt, who had been Solicitor-General under Mr. Gladstone, rushed to the defence of the bill, attacked Mr. Gladstone vehemently, called upon Mr. Disraeli to prove himself the leader of the English people, and in impassioned sentences reminded him that he had put his hand to the plough and must not draw it back. Mr. Gladstone dealt with his late subordinate in a few sentences of good-humoured contempt, in which he expressed his special surprise at the sudden and portentous display of erudition which Sir William Harcourt had poured out upon the House. Sir William Harcourt was even then a distinctly rising man. He was an effective and somewhat overbearing speaker, with a special aptitude for the kind of elementary argument and the

knock-down personalities which the House of Commons can never fail to understand. The House liked to listen to him. He had a loud voice, and never gave his hearers the trouble of having to strain their ears or their attention to follow him. His arguments were never subtle enough to puzzle the simplest country gentleman for one moment. His quotations had no distracting novelty about them, but fell on the ear with a familiar and friendly sound. His jokes were unmistakable in their meaning; his whole style was good strong black and white. He could get up a case admirably. He astonished the House, and must probably even have astonished himself, by the vast amount of ecclesiastical knowledge which with only the preparation of a day or two he was able to bring to bear upon the most abstruse or perplexed questions of Church government. He had the advantage of being sure of everything. He poured out his eloquence and his learning on the most difficult ecclesiastical questions with the resolute assurance of one who had given a life to the study. Perhaps we ought rather to say that he showed the resolute assurance which only belongs to one who has not given much of his life to the study of the subject. Mr. Disraeli responded so far to Sir William Harcourt's stirring appeal as to make himself the patron of the bill and the leader of the movement in its favour. Mr. Disraeli saw that by far the greater body of English public opinion out of doors was against the Ritualists, and that for the moment public opinion accepted the whole controversy as a dispute for or against Ritualism. The course taken by the Prime Minister further enlivened the debates by bringing about a keen little passage of arms between him and Lord Salisbury, whom Mr. Disraeli described as a great master of jibes and flouts and jeers. The bill was passed in both Houses of Parliament, and obtained the Royal assent almost at the end of the session.

A measure for the protection of seamen against the danger of being sent to sea in vessels unfit for the voyage was forced upon the Government by Mr. Plimsoll. Mr. Plimsoll was a man who had pushed his way through life by ability and hard work into independence and wealth. He was full of human sympathy, and was especially interested in the welfare of the poor. Mr. Plimsoll's attention happened to be turned to the condition of our merchant seamen, and he found that the state of the law left them almost absolutely at the mercy of unscrupulous and selfish shipowners. It was easy to insure a vessel, and once insured it mattered little to such a shipowner how

soon she went to the bottom. The law gave to magistrates the power of sending to prison the seaman who for any reason refused to fulfil his contract and go to sea. The criminal law bore upon him; only the civil law applied to the employer. Mr. Plimsoll actually found cases of seamen sentenced to prison because they refused to sail in crazy ships, which, when they put to sea, never touched a port but went down in mid-ocean. Letters were found in the pockets of drowned seamen which showed that they had made their friends aware of their forebodings as to the condition of the vessel that was to be their coffin. Mr. Plimsoll began a regular crusade against certain shipowners. He published a book called, 'Our Seamen, an Appeal,' in which he made the most startling, and it must be added the most sweeping, charges. Courts of law were invoked to deal with his assertions; the authority of Parliament was called on to protect shipowning members against the violence of the irrepressible philanthropist. Mr. Plimsoll was clearly wrong in some of his charges against individuals, but a very general opinion prevailed that he was only too just in his condemnation of the system. Mr. Plimsoll brought in a bill for the better protection of the lives of seamen. It proposed a compulsory survey of all ships before leaving port, various precautions against overloading, the restriction of deck-loading, and the compulsory painting of a load line, the position of which was to be determined by legislation. This measure was strongly opposed by the shipowners in the House, and by many others as well as they, who regarded it as too stringent, and who also feared that by putting too much responsibility on the Government it would take all responsibility off the shipowners. The bill came to the test of a division on June 24, 1874, and was rejected by a majority of only three, 170 voting for it and 173 against. The Government then recognising the importance of the subject, and the strong feeling which prevailed in the country with regard to it, introduced a Merchant Shipping Bill of their own in the session of 1875. It did not go nearly so far as Mr. Plimsoll would have desired, but it did promise to be at least part of a series of legislation which further developed might have accomplished the object. Such as it was, however, the Government did not press it, and towards the end of July Mr. Disraeli announced that they would not go further that year with the measure.

The 22nd of July saw one of the most extraordinary scenes

that ever took place in the House of Commons. Mr. Plimsoll, under the influence of disappointment and of anger, seemed to have lost all self-control. He denounced some of the shipowners of that House; he threatened to name and expose them; he called them villains who had sent brave men to death. When interrupted by the Speaker, and told that he must not apply the term villains to members of the House, he repeated again and again, and in the most vociferous tones, that they were villains, and that he would abide by his words. He refused to recognise the authority of the Speaker. He shouted, shook his fist at the leading members of the Government, and rushed out of the House in a state of wild excitement. Thereupon Mr. Disraeli moved, 'that the Speaker do reprimand Mr. Plimsoll for his disorderly behaviour.' Mr. A. M. Sullivan, one of the Home Rule Members, returned for the first time at the general election, a man of remarkable eloquence and of high character, interposed on behalf of Mr. Plimsoll. He pleaded that Mr. Plimsoll was seriously ill and hardly able to account for his actions, owing to mental excitement arising from an overwrought system, and from the intensity of his zeal in the cause of the merchant seamen. He asked that a week should be given Mr. Plimsoll to consider his position. Mr. Fawcett and other members made a similar appeal, and the Government consented to postpone a decision of the question for a week. Mr. Plimsoll had offended against the rules, the traditions, and the dignity of the House, and many even of those who sympathised with his general purpose thought he had damaged his cause and ruined his individual position. Nothing, however, could be more extraordinary and unexpected than the result. It was one of those occasions in which the public out of doors showed that they could get to the real heart of a question more quickly and more clearly than Parliament itself. Out of doors it was thoroughly understood that Mr. Plimsoll was too sweeping in his charges; that he was entirely mistaken in some of them; that he had denounced men who did not deserve denunciation; that his behaviour in the House of Commons was a gross offence against order. But the difference between the public and the House of Commons was, that while understanding and admitting all this, the public clearly saw that as to the main question at issue Mr. Plimsoll was entirely in the right. The country was therefore determined to stand by him.

Great meetings were held all over England during the next

few days, at every one of which those who were present pledged themselves to assist Mr. Plimsoll in his general object and policy. The result was that when Mr. Plimsoll appeared in the House of Commons the week after, and in a very full and handsome manner made apology for his offences against Parliamentary order, it was apparent to everyone in the House and out of it that he was master of the situation, and that the Government would have to advance with more or less rapid strides along the path where he was leading. Finally, the Government brought in, and forcibly pushed through, a Merchant Shipping Bill, which met for the moment some of the difficulties of the case. The Government afterwards promised to supplement it by legislation, regulating in some way the system of maritime insurances. Other things, however, interfered with the carrying out of the Government proposals, and the regulation of maritime insurance was forgotten.

The Government seemed for a while inclined to keep plodding steadily on with quiet schemes of domestic legislation. They tinkered at a measure for the security of improvements made by agricultural tenants. They made it purely permissive, and therefore thoroughly worthless. This one defect tainted many of their schemes of domestic reform—this inclination to make every reform permissive. It seemed to be thought a clever stroke of management to introduce a measure professedly for the removal of some inequality or other grievance, and then to make it permissive and allow all parties concerned to contract themselves out of it. Mr. Cross, the Home Secretary, however, proved a very efficient Minister, and introduced many useful schemes of legislation, among the rest an Artisans' Dwelling Bill, the object of which was to enable local authorities to pull down houses unfit for human habitation and rebuild on the sites. The Government made experiments in reaction here and there. They restored the appellate jurisdiction of the House of Lords, which had seemed actually doomed. They got into some trouble by issuing a circular to captains of war vessels on the subject of the reception of slaves on board their ships. The principle which the circular laid down was in substance a full recognition of the rights of a slave-owner over a fugitive slave. The country rose in indignation against this monstrous reversal of England's time-honoured policy; and the circular was withdrawn and a new one issued. This too proved unsatisfactory. It was impossible for the Government to resist the popular demand; some

of their own men in the House of Commons fell away from them and insisted that the old principle must be kept up, and that the slave-owner shall not take his slave from under the shadow of the English flag.

All this time Mr. Gladstone had withdrawn from the paths of Parliamentary life and had taken to polemical literature. He was stirring up a heated controversy with Cardinal Manning, Dr. Newman, and other great controversialists, by endeavouring to prove that absolute obedience to the Catholic Church was henceforward inconsistent with the principles of freedom, and that the doctrine of papal infallibility was everywhere the enemy of liberty. Grave politicians were not a little scandalised at the position taken by a statesman who only the other day was Prime Minister. It seemed clear that Mr. Gladstone never meant to take any leading part in politics again. Surely, it was said, if he had the remotest idea of entering the political field anew, he never would have thus gratuitously given offence to the Roman Catholic subjects of the Queen and to all the Catholic Sovereigns and Ministers of Europe. Most of his friends shook their heads; most of his enemies were delighted. There was some difficulty at first about the choice of a successor to Mr. Gladstone. Two men stood intellectually high above all other possible competitors—Mr. Bright and Mr. Lowe. But it was well known that Mr. Bright's health would not allow him to undertake such laborious duties, and Mr. Lowe was universally assumed to have none of the leader's qualities. Sir William Harcourt had not yet weight enough; neither had Mr. Goschen. The real choice was between Mr. Forster and Lord Hartington. Mr. Forster, however, knew that he had estranged the Nonconformists from him by the course he had taken in his education measures, and he withdrew from what he thought an untenable position. Lord Hartington was therefore arrived at by a sort of process of exhaustion. He proved much better than his promise. He had a robust, straightforward nature, and by constant practice he made himself an effective debater. Men liked the courage and the candid admission of his own deficiencies, with which he braced himself up to his most difficult task—to take the place of Gladstone in debate and to confront Disraeli.

A change soon came over the spirit of the Administration. It began to be seen more and more clearly that Mr. Disraeli had not come into office merely to consider prosaic measures of domestic legislation. His inclinations were all for the

broader and more brilliant fields of foreign politics. The marked contrast between the political aptitudes and tastes of Mr. Disraeli and Mr. Gladstone came in to influence still further the difference between the policy of the new Government and that of its predecessor. Mr. Gladstone delighted in the actual work and business of administration. Now Mr. Disraeli had neither taste nor aptitude for the details of administration. He enjoyed administration on the large scale; he loved political debate; he liked to make a great speech. But when he was not engaged in his favourite work he preferred to be doing nothing. It was natural therefore that Mr. Gladstone's Administration should be one of practical work; that it should introduce Bills to deal with perplexed and complicated grievances; that it should take care to keep the finances of the country in good condition. Mr. Disraeli had no personal interest in such things. He loved to feed his mind on gorgeous imperial fancies. It pleased him to think that England was, what he would persist in calling her, an Asiatic power, and that he was administering the affairs of a great Oriental Empire. Mr. Disraeli had never until now had an opportunity of showing what his own style of statesmanship would be. He had always been in office only, but not in power. Now he had for the first time a strong majority behind him. He could do as he liked. He had the full confidence of the Sovereign. His party were now wholly devoted to him. They began to regard him as infallible. Even those who detested still feared; men believed in his power none the less because they had no faith in his policy. In the House of Commons he had no longer any rival to dread in debate. Mr. Gladstone had withdrawn from the active business of politics; Mr. Bright was not strong enough in physical health to care much for controversy; there was no one else who could by any possibility be regarded as a proper adversary for Mr. Disraeli. The new Prime Minister therefore had everything his own way. He soon showed what sort of statesmanship he liked best. In politics as in art the weaknesses of the master of a school are most clearly seen in the performances of his imitators and admirers. A distinguished member of Mr. Disraeli's Cabinet proclaimed that since the Conservatives came into office there had been something stirring in the very air which spoke of imperial enterprise. The Elizabethan days were to be restored, it was proudly declared. England was to resume her high place among the nations. She was to make her

influence felt all over the world, but more especially on the European continent. The Cabinets and Chancelleries of Europe were to learn that nothing was to be done any more without the authority of England. 'A spirited foreign policy' was to be inaugurated, a new era was to begin.

Perhaps the first indication of the new foreign policy was given by the purchase of the shares which the Khedive of Egypt held in the Suez Canal. The Khedive of Egypt held nearly half the 400,000 original shares in the Canal, and the Khedive was going every day faster and faster on the road to ruin. He was on the brink of bankruptcy. His 176,000 shares came into the market; and on November 25, 1875, the world was astonished by the news that the English Government had turned stock-jobber and bought them for four millions sterling. The idea was not the Government's own. The editor of a London evening paper, Mr. Frederick Greenwood, was the man to whom the thought first occurred. He made it known to the Prime Minister, and Mr. Disraeli was caught by the proposition, and the shares were instantly bought up in the name of the English Government. Seldom in our time has any act on the part of a Government been received with such general approbation. The London newspapers broke into a chorus of applause. The London clubs were delighted. The air rang with praises of the courage and spirit shown by the Ministry. If here and there a faint voice was raised to suggest that the purchase was a foolish proceeding, that it was useless, that it was undignified, a shout of offended patriotism drowned the ignoble remonstrance. The act is of historical importance as the first of a series of strokes made by the Government in foreign policy, each of which came in the nature of a surprise to Parliament and the country. It is probable that Mr. Disraeli counted upon making his Government popular by affording to the public at intervals the exciting luxury of a new sensation. The public were undoubtedly rather tired of having been so long quiet and prosperous. They liked to know that their Government was doing something. Mr. Disraeli led the fashion, and stimulated the public taste. The Government tried to establish a South African Confederation, and sent out Mr. Froude, the romantic historian, to act as the representative of their policy. The Government made some changes in the relations of the India Office here to the Viceroy in Calcutta, which gave much greater power into the hands of the Secretary for India. One im-

mediate result of this was the retirement of Lord Northbrook, a prudent and able man, before the term of his administration had actually arrived. Mr. Disraeli gave the country another little surprise. He appointed Lord Lytton Viceroy of India. Lord Lytton had been previously known chiefly as the writer of pretty and sensuous verse, and the author of one or two showy and feeble novels. The world was a good deal astonished at the appointment of such a man to an office which had strained the intellectual energies of men like Dalhousie and Canning and Elgin. But people were in general willing to believe that Mr. Disraeli knew Lord Lytton to be possessed of a gift of administration which the world outside had not any chance of discerning in him. There was something too which gratified many persons in the appointment. It seemed gracious and kindly of Mr. Disraeli thus to recognise and exalt the son of his old friend and companion in arms. There was a feeling all over England which wished well to the appointment and sincerely hoped it might prove a success.

Another little sensation was created by the invention of a new title for the Queen. At the beginning of the Session of 1876 Mr. Disraeli announced that the Queen was to be called 'Empress of India.' A strong dislike was felt to this superfluous and tawdry addition to the ancient style of the sovereigns of England. The educated feeling of the country rose in revolt against this preposterous innovation. Some of the debates in the House of Commons were full of fire and spirit, and recalled the memory of more stirring times when the Liberal party was in heart and strength. Mr. Lowe spoke against the new title with a vivacity and a bitterness of sarcasm that reminded listeners of his famous opposition to the Reform Bill of 1866. Mr. Joseph Cowen, Member for Newcastle, who had been in Parliament for some sessions without making any mark, suddenly broke into the debates with a speech which at once won him the name of an orator, and which a leading member of the Government, Mr. Gathorne Hardy, described as having 'electrified' the House. Mr. Disraeli chaffed the Opposition rather than reasoned with it. He cited one justification of the title, a letter from a young lady at school who had directed his attention to the fact that in 'Guy's Geography' the Queen was already described as Empress of India. This style of argument did not add much to the dignity of the debate. Mr. Lowe spoke with justifiable anger and contempt of the Prime Minister's introducing 'the lispings of the nursery' into a

grave discussion, and asked whether Mr. Disraeli wished to make the House in general think as meanly of the subject as he did himself. The Government, of course, carried their point. They deferred so far to public feeling as to put into the Act a provision against the use of the Imperial title in the United Kingdom. There was indeed a desire that its use should be prohibited everywhere except in India, and most of the members of the Opposition were at first under the impression that the Government had undertaken to do so much. But the only restriction introduced into the Act had reference to the employment of the additional title in these islands. The unlucky subject was the occasion of a new and a somewhat unseemly dispute afterwards. In a speech which he delivered to a public meeting at East Retford, Mr. Lowe made an unfortunate statement to the effect that the Queen had endeavoured to induce two former Ministers to confer upon her this new title and had not succeeded. Mr. Lowe proved to be absolutely wrong in his assertion. No attempt of the kind had ever been made by the Queen. Mr. Disraeli found his enemy delivered into his hands. The question was incidentally and indirectly brought up in the House of Commons on May 2, 1876, and Mr. Disraeli seized the opportunity. He denounced Mr. Lowe, thundered at him from across the table, piled up a heap of negative evidence to show that his assertion could not be true, and at the very close of his speech came down on the hapless offender with the crushing announcement that he had the authority of the Queen herself to contradict the statement. Mr. Lowe sat like one crushed, while Mr. Disraeli roared at him and banged the table at him. He said nothing that night; but on the following Thursday evening he made an apology, which assuredly did not want completeness or humility. The title which was the occasion for so much debate has not come into greater popular favour since that time. The country soon forgot all about the matter. More serious questions were coming up to engage the attention of the public.

When Mr. Disraeli was pressed during the debates on the Royal Title to give some really serious reason for the change, it was observed as significant that he made reference more or less vague to the necessity of asserting the position of the Sovereign of England as supreme ruler over the whole empire of India. Mr. Disraeli had purposely touched a chord which was sure to vibrate all over the country. The necessity to

which he alluded was the necessity of setting up the flag of England on the citadel of England's Asiatic Empire as a warning to the one enemy whom the English people believed they had reason to dread. Mr. Disraeli had raised what has been called the Russian spectre. A great crisis was now again at hand. During all the interval since the Crimean War Turkey had been occupied in throwing away every opportunity for her political and social reorganisation. There had been insurrections in Crete, in the Herzegovina, in other parts of the provinces misgoverned by Turkey; and they had been put down, whenever the Porte was strong enough, with a barbarous severity. Russia meanwhile was returning to the position she occupied before the Crimean War. She had lately been making rapid advances into Central Asia. Post after post which were once believed to be secure from her approach were dropping into her hands. Her goal of one day became her starting-point of the next. Early in July 1875, Lord Derby received an account of the disturbances in the Herzegovina, and something like an organised insurrection in Bosnia. The provinces inhabited by men of alien race and religion over which Turkey rules have always been the source of her weakness. Fate has given to the most incapable and worthless Government in the world the task of ruling over a great variety of nationalities and of creeds that agree in hardly anything but in their common detestation of Ottoman rule. The Slav dreads and detests the Greek. The Greek despises the Slav. The Albanian objects alike to Slav and to Greek. The Mohammedan Albanian detests the Catholic Albanian. The Slavs are drawn towards Russia by affinity of race and of religion. But this very fact, which makes in one sense their political strength, brings with it a certain condition of weakness, because by making them more formidable to Greeks and to Germans it increases the dislike of their growing power, and the determination to oppose it. The settlement made by the Crimean War had since that time been gradually breaking down. Servia was an independent State in all but the name. The Danubian provinces, which were to have been governed by separate rulers, united themselves first under one ruler and then in one political system, and at last became the sovereign State of Roumania under the Prussian Prince, Charles of Hohenzollern. Thus the result which most of the European Powers at the time of the Congress of Paris endeavoured to prevent was successfully accomplished in spite of their inclinations. The efforts to keep

Bosnia and Herzegovina in quiet subjection to the Sultan proved a miserable failure. The insurrection which now broke out in Herzegovina spread with rapidity. The Turkish statesmen insisted that it was receiving help not only from Russia but from the subjects of Austria as well as from Servia and Montenegro. An appeal was made to the English Government to use its influence with Austria in order to prevent the insurgents from receiving any assistance from across the Austrian frontier. Servia and Montenegro were appealed to in a similar manner. Lord Derby seems to have acted with indecision and with feebleness. He does not appear to have appreciated the immediate greatness of the crisis, and he offended popular feeling, and even the public conscience, by urging on the Porte that the best they could do was to put down the insurrection as quickly as possible, and not allow it to swell to the magnitude of a question of European interest.

The insurrection continued to spread, and at last it was determined by some of the Western Powers that the time had come for European intervention. Count Andrassy, the Austrian Minister, drew up a Note, addressed to the Porte, in which Austria, Germany, and Russia united in a declaration that the promises of reform made by the Porte had not been carried into effect, and that some combined action by the Powers of Europe was necessary to insist on the fulfilment of the many engagements which Turkey had made and broken. This Note was dated December 30, 1875, and it was communicated to the Powers which had signed the Treaty of Paris. France and Italy were ready at once to join it; but England delayed. In fact Lord Derby held off so long that it was not until he had received a despatch from the Porte itself requesting his Government to join in the Note, that he at last consented to take part in the remonstrance. Rightly or wrongly the statesmen of Constantinople had got it into their heads that England was their devoted friend, bound by her own interests to protect them against whatever opposition. Instead therefore of regarding England's co-operation in the Andrassy Note as one other influence brought to compel them to fulfil their engagements, they seem to have accepted it as a secret force working on their side to enable them to escape from their responsibilities. Lord Derby joined in the Andrassy Note. It was sent to the Porte. The Ottoman Government promised to carry out in the readiest manner the

suggestions which the Note contained, and did nothing more than promise. After a few weeks it became perfectly evident that she had not only done nothing, but had never intended to do anything. Russia, therefore, proposed that the three Imperial Ministers of the Continent should meet at Berlin and consider what steps should be taken in order to make the Andrassy Note a reality. A document, called the Berlin Memorandum, was drawn up, in which the three Powers proposed to consider the measures by which to enforce on Turkey the fulfilment of her broken promises. It was distinctly implied that should Turkey fail to comply, force would be used to compel her. But, on the other hand, it is clear that this was a menace which would of itself have ensured the object. It is out of the question to suppose that Turkey would have thought of resisting the concerted action of England, France, Austria, Germany, Russia, and Italy.

Unfortunately, however, Lord Derby and the English Government refused to join in the Berlin Memorandum. The refusal of England was fatal to the project. The Memorandum was never presented. Concert between the European Powers was for a time at an end. From that moment everyone in Western Europe knew that war was certain in the East. A succession of startling events kept public attention on the strain. There was an outbreak of Mussulman fanaticism at Salonica, and the French and German Consuls were murdered. A revolutionary demonstration took place in Constantinople, and the Sultan Abdul Aziz was dethroned. The miserable Abdul Aziz committed suicide in a day or two after. This was the Sultan who had been received in England with so much official ceremony and public acclaim. His nephew Murad was made Sultan in his place. Murad reigned only three months and was then dethroned, and his brother Hamid put in his place. Suddenly the attention of the English public was called away to events more terrible than palace revolutions in Constantinople. An insurrection had broken out in Bulgaria, and the Turkish Government sent large numbers of Bashi-Bazouks and other irregular troops to crush it. They did not, however, stay their hand when the insurrection had been crushed. Repression soon turned into massacre. Rumours began to reach Constantinople of hideous wholesale murders of women and children committed in Bulgaria. The Constantinople correspondent of the *Daily News* investigated the evidence, and found it but too true. In a few

days after accounts were laid before the English public of the deeds which ever since have been known as 'the Bulgarian atrocities.'

Mr. Disraeli at first treated these terrible stories with a levity which jarred harshly on the ears of almost all his listeners. It was plain that he did not believe them or attach any importance to them. He took no trouble to examine the testimony on which they rested. He, therefore, thought himself warranted in dealing with them as if they were merely stories to laugh at. Mr. Disraeli had always the faculty of persuading himself to believe or disbelieve anything according as he liked. But the subject proved to be far too serious for light-minded treatment. Mr. Baring, the English Consul, sent out specially to Bulgaria to make inquiries, and who was supposed to be in general sympathy with Turkey, reported that no fewer than twelve thousand persons had been killed in the district of Philippopolis. The defenders of the Turks insisted that the only deaths were those which took place in fight; insurgents on one side, Turkish soldiers on the other. But Mr. Baring, as well as Mr. MacGahan, the *Daily News* correspondent, saw whole masses of the dead bodies of women and children piled up in places where the corpses of no combatants were to be seen. The women and children were simply massacred. The Turkish Government may not have known at first of the deeds that were done by their soldiers. But it is certain that after the facts had been forced upon their attention, they conferred new honours upon the chief perpetrators of the crimes which shocked the moral sense of all Europe.

Mr. Bright happily described the agitation which followed in England as an uprising of the English people. At first it was an uprising without a leader. Soon, however, it had a chief of incomparable energy and power. Mr. Gladstone came out of his semi-retirement. He flung himself into the agitation against Turkey with the impassioned energy of a youth. He made speeches in the House of Commons and out of it; he attended monster meetings indoors and out of doors; he published pamphlets, he wrote letters, he brought forward motions in Parliament; he denounced the crimes of Turkey, and the policy which would support Turkey, with an eloquence that for a time set England aflame. After a while no doubt there set in a sort of reaction against the fervent mood. The country could not long continue in this white heat of excitement. Mr. Disraeli and his supporters were able

to work with great effect on that strong deep-rooted feeling of the modern Englishman, his distrust and dread of Russia. Mr. Gladstone had in his pamphlet, 'Bulgarian Horrors, and the Question of the East,' insisted that the only way to secure any permanent good for the Christian provinces of Turkey was to turn the Turkish officials 'bag and baggage' out of them. The cry went forth that he had called for the expulsion of the Turks from Europe, and that the moment the Turks went out of Constantinople the Russians must come in. Nothing could have been better suited to rouse up reaction and alarm. A sudden and strong revulsion of feeling took place in favour of the Government. Mr. Gladstone was honestly regarded by millions of Englishmen as the friend and the instrument of Russia, Mr. Disraeli as the champion of England, and the enemy of England's enemy.

Mr. Disraeli? By this time there was no Mr. Disraeli. The 11th of August, 1876, was an important day in the parliamentary history of England. Mr. Disraeli made then his last speech in the House of Commons. He sustained and defended the policy of the Government as an Imperial policy, the object of which was to maintain the Empire of England. The House of Commons little knew that this speech was the last it was to hear from him. The secret was well kept. It was made known only to the newspapers that night. Next morning all England knew that Benjamin Disraeli had become Earl of Beaconsfield. Everybody was well satisfied that if Mr. Disraeli liked an earldom he should have it. His political career had had claims enough to any reward of the kind that his Sovereign could bestow. If he had battled for honour it was but fair that he should have the prize. Coming as it did just then the announcement of his elevation to the peerage seemed like a defiance flung in the face of those who would arraign his policy. The attacks made on Mr. Disraeli were to be answered by Lord Beaconsfield; his enemies had become his footstool.

CHAPTER XXVII.

THE CONGRESS OF BERLIN.

LORD BEACONSFIELD went down to the county which he had represented so long, and made a farewell speech at Aylesbury. The speech was in many parts worthy of the occasion. Un-

fortunately Lord Beaconsfield soon went on to make a fierce attack on his political opponents. The controversy between Lord Beaconsfield and Mr. Gladstone, bitter enough before, became still more bitter now. The policy each represented may be described in a few very summary words. Lord Beaconsfield was for maintaining Turkey at all risks as a barrier against Russia. Mr. Gladstone was for renouncing all responsibility for Turkey and taking the consequences.

The common expectation was soon fulfilled. At the close of June 1876, Servia and Montenegro declared war against Turkey. Servia's struggle was short. At the beginning of September the struggle was over, and Servia was practically at Turkey's feet. The hardy Montenegrin mountaineers held their own stoutly against the Turks everywhere, but they could not seriously influence the fortunes of a war. Russia intervened and insisted upon an armistice, and her demand was acceded to by Turkey. Meanwhile the general feeling in England on both sides was growing stronger and stronger. Public meetings of Mr. Gladstone's supporters were held all over the country, and the English Government was urged in the most emphatic manner to bring some strong influence to bear on Turkey. On the other hand, it cannot be doubted that the common suspicion of Russia's designs began to grow more keen and wakeful than ever. Lord Derby frankly made known to the Emperor Alexander what was thought or feared in England, and the Emperor replied by pledging his sacred word that he had no intention of occupying Constantinople, and that if he were compelled by events to occupy any part of Bulgaria, it should be only provisionally, and until the safety of the Christians should be secured. Then Lord Derby proposed that a Conference of the European Powers should be held at Constantinople in order to agree upon some scheme which should provide at once for the proper government of the various provinces and populations subject to Turkey, and at the same time for the maintenance of the independence and integrity of the Ottoman Empire. The proposal was accepted by all the Great Powers, and on November 8, 1876, it was announced that Lord Salisbury and Sir Henry Elliott, the English Ambassador at Constantinople, were to attend as the representatives of England.

Lord Beaconsfield was apparently determined to recover the popularity that had been somewhat impaired by his unlucky way of dealing with the massacres of Bulgaria. His

plan now was to go boldly in for denunciation of Russia. He sometimes talked of Russia as he might of an enemy who had already declared war against England. The prospects of a peaceful settlement of the European controversy seemed to become heavily overclouded. Lord Beaconsfield appeared to be holding the dogs of war by the collar, and only waiting for the convenient moment to let them slip. Everyone knew that some of his colleagues, Lord Derby for example, and Lord Carnarvon, were opposed to any thought of war, and felt almost as strongly for the Christian provinces of Turkey as Mr. Gladstone did. But people shook their heads doubtfully when it was asked whether Lord Derby or Lord Carnarvon, or both combined, could prevail in strength of will against Lord Beaconsfield.

The Conference at Constantinople came to nothing. The Turkish statesmen at first attempted to put off the diplomatists of the West by the announcement that the Sultan had granted a Constitution to Turkey, and that there was to be a Parliament at which representatives of all the provinces were to speak for themselves. There was in fact a Turkish Parliament called together. Of course the Western statesmen could not be put off by an announcement of this kind. They knew well enough what a Turkish Parliament must mean. It seems almost superfluous to say that the Turkish Parliament was ordered to disappear very soon after the occasion passed away for trying to deceive the Great European Powers. Evidently Turkey had got it into her head that the English Government would at the last moment stand by her, and would not permit her to be coerced. She refused to come to terms, and the Conference broke up without having accomplished any good. New attempts at arrangement were made between England, Russia, and others of the Great Powers, but they fell through. Then at last, on April 24, 1877, Russia declared war against Turkey, and on June 27 a Russian army crossed the Danube and moved towards the Balkans, meeting with comparatively little resistance, while at the same time another Russian force invaded Asia Minor.

For a while the Russians seemed likely to carry all before them. But they had made the one great mistake of altogether undervaluing their enemies. Their preparations were hasty and imperfect. The Turks turned upon them unexpectedly and made a gallant and almost desperate resistance. One of their commanders, Osman Pasha, suddenly threw up defensive

works at Plevna, in Bulgaria, a point the Russians had neglected to secure, and maintained himself there, repulsing the Russians many times with great slaughter. For a while success seemed altogether on the side of the Turks, and many people in England were convinced that the Russian enterprise was already an entire failure; that nothing remained for the armies of the Czar but retreat, disaster, and disgrace. Under the directing skill, however, of General Todleben, the great soldier whose splendid defence of Sebastopol had made the one grand military reputation of the Crimean War, the fortunes of the campaign again turned. Kars was taken by assault on November 18, 1877; Plevna surrendered on December 10. At the opening of 1878 the Turks were completely prostrate. The road to Constantinople was clear. Before the English public had time to recover their breath and to observe what was taking place, the victorious armies of Russia were almost within sight of the minarets of Stamboul.

Meanwhile the English Government were taking momentous action. In the first days of 1878 Sir Henry Elliott, who had been Ambassador in Constantinople, was transferred to Vienna, and Mr. Layard, who had been Minister at Madrid, was sent to the Turkish capital to represent England there. Mr. Layard was known to be a strong believer in Turkey; more Turkish in some respects than the Turks themselves. But he was a man of superabundant energy; of what might be described as boisterous energy. The Ottoman Government could not but accept his appointment as a new and stronger proof that the English Government were determined to stand their friend; but they ought to have accepted it too as evidence that the English Government were determined to use some pressure to make them amenable to reason. Unfortunately it would appear that the Sultan's Government accepted Mr. Layard's appointment in the one sense only and not in the other. Parliament was called together at least a fortnight before the time usual during recent years. The Speech from the Throne announced that her Majesty could not conceal from herself that should the hostilities between Russia and Turkey unfortunately be prolonged 'some unexpected occurrence may render it incumbent on me to adopt measures of precaution.' This looked ominous to those who wished for peace, and it raised the spirits of the war party. There was a very large and a very noisy war party already in existence. It was particularly strong in London. It

embraced some Liberals as well as nearly all Tories. It was popular in the music-halls and the public-houses of London. The men of action got a nickname. A poet of the music-halls had composed a ballad which was sung at one of these caves of harmony every night amid the tumultuous applause of excited patriots. The refrain of this war-song contained the spirit-stirring words :—

> We don't want to fight, but, by Jingo, if we do,
> We've got the ships, we've got the men, we've got the money too.

Some one whose pulses this lyrical outburst of national pride failed to stir called the party of its enthusiasts Jingoes. The name was caught up at once, and the party were universally known as the Jingoes. The term, applied as one of ridicule and reproach, was adopted by chivalrous Jingoes as a name of pride.

The Government ordered the Mediterranean fleet to pass the Dardanelles and go up to Constantinople. The Chancellor of the Exchequer announced that he would ask for a supplementary estimate of six millions for naval and military purposes. Thereupon Lord Carnarvon, the Colonial Secretary, at once resigned. He had been anxious to get out of the Ministry before, but Lord Beaconsfield induced him to remain. He disapproved now so strongly of the despatch of the fleet to Constantinople and the supplementary vote, that he would not any longer defer his resignation. Lord Derby was also anxious to resign, and indeed tendered his resignation, but he was prevailed upon to withdraw it. The fleet meanwhile was ordered back from the Dardanelles to Besika Bay. It had got as far as the opening of the Straits when it was recalled. The Liberal Opposition in the House of Commons kept on protesting against the various war measures of the Government, but with little effect. While all this agitation in and out of Parliament was going on, the news came that the Turks, utterly broken down, had been compelled to sign an armistice, and an agreement containing a basis of peace, at Adrianople. Then, following quickly on the heels of this announcement, came a report that the Russians, notwithstanding the armistice, were pushing on towards Constantinople with the intention of occupying the Turkish capital. A cry of alarm and indignation broke out in London. If the clamour of the streets at that moment had been the voice of England, nothing could have prevented a declaration of

war against Russia. Happily, however, it was proved that the rumour of Russian advance was unfounded. The fleet was now sent in good earnest through the Dardanelles, and anchored a few miles below Constantinople. Russia at first protested that if the English fleet passed the Straits Russian troops ought to occupy the city. Lord Derby was firm, and terms of arrangement were found—English troops were not to be disembarked and the Russians were not to advance. Russia was still open to negotiation.

Probably Russia had no idea of taking on herself the tremendous responsibility of an occupation of Constantinople. She had entered into a treaty with Turkey, the famous Treaty of San Stefano, which secured for the populations of the Christian provinces almost complete independence of Turkey, and was to create a great new Bulgarian State with a seaport on the Egean Sea. The English Government refused to recognise this treaty. Russia offered to submit the treaty to the perusal, if we may use the expression, of a Congress; but argued that the stipulations which merely concerned Turkey and herself were for Turkey and herself to settle between them. This was obviously an untenable position. It is out of the question to suppose that, as long as European policy is conducted on its present principles, the Great Powers of the West could consent to allow Russia to force on Turkey any terms she might think proper. Turkey meanwhile kept feebly moaning that she had been coerced into signing the treaty. The Government determined to call in the Reserves, to summon a contingent of Indian troops to Europe, to occupy Cyprus, and to make an armed landing on the coast of Syria. All these resolves were not, however, made known at the time. Everyone felt sure that something important was going on, and public expectancy was strained to the full. On March 28, 1878, Lord Derby announced his resignation. Measures, he said, had been resolved upon of which he could not approve. He did not give any explanation of the measures to which he objected. Lord Beaconsfield spoke a few words of good feeling and good taste after Lord Derby's announcement. He had hoped, he said, that Lord Derby would soon come to occupy the place of Prime Minister which he now held; he dwelt upon their long friendship. Not much was said on either side of what the Government were doing. The last hope of

the Peace Party seemed to have vanished when Lord Derby left his office.

Lord Salisbury was made Foreign Minister. He was succeeded in the India Office by Mr. Gathorne Hardy, now created Lord Cranbrook. Colonel Stanley, brother of Lord Derby, took the office of Minister of War in Lord Cranbrook's place. Sir Michael Hicks-Beach had already become Secretary for the Colonies on the resignation of Lord Carnarvon. The post of Irish Secretary had been given to Mr. James Lowther. Lord Salisbury issued a circular in which he declared that it would be impossible for England to enter a Congress which was not free to consider the whole of the provisions of the Treaty of San Stefano. The very day after Parliament had adjourned for the Easter recess, the Indian Government received orders to send certain of their troops to Malta. This was a complete surprise to the country. It was made the occasion for a very serious controversy on a grave constitutional question in both Houses of Parliament. The Opposition contended that the constitutional principle which left it for Parliament to fix the number of soldiers the Crown might maintain in England was reduced to nothingness if the Prime Minister could at any moment, without even consulting Parliament, draw what reinforcements he thought fit from the almost limitless resources of India. The majority then supporting Lord Beaconsfield were not, however, much disposed to care about argument. They were willing to approve of any step Lord Beaconsfield might think fit to take.

Prince Bismarck had often during these events shown an inclination to exhibit himself in the new attitude of a peaceful mediator. He now interposed again and issued invitations for a Congress to be held in Berlin to discuss the whole contents of the Treaty of San Stefano. After some delay, discussion, and altercation, Russia agreed to accept the invitation on the conditions proposed, and it was finally resolved that a Congress should assemble in Berlin on the approaching June 13. Much to the surprise of the public, Lord Beaconsfield announced that he himself would attend, accompanied by Lord Salisbury, and conduct the negotiations in Berlin. The event was we believe without precedent. Never before had an English Prime Minister left the country whilst Parliament was sitting to act as the representative of England in a foreign capital. The part he had undertaken to play suited Lord Beaconsfield's love for the picturesque and

the theatrical. His journey to Berlin was a sort of triumphal progress. At every great city, almost at every railway station, as he passed, crowds turned out, drawn partly by curiosity, partly by admiration, to see the English statesman whose strange and varied career had so long excited the wondering attention of Europe. Prince Bismarck presided at the Congress, and, it is said, departed from the usual custom of diplomatic assemblages by opening the proceedings in English. The use of our language was understood to be a kindly and somewhat patronising deference to the English Prime Minister, whose knowledge of spoken French was supposed to have fallen rather into decay of late years. The Congress discussed the whole, or nearly the whole, of the questions opened up by the recent war. Greece claimed to be heard there, and after some delay and some difficulty was allowed to plead in her own cause.

The Treaty of Berlin recognised the complete independence of Roumania, of Servia, and of Montenegro, subject only to certain stipulations with regard to religious equality in each of these States. To Montenegro it gave a seaport and a slip of territory attaching to it. Thus one great object of the mountaineers was accomplished. They were able to reach the sea. The treaty created, north of the Balkans, a State of Bulgaria: a much smaller Bulgaria than that sketched in the Treaty of San Stefano. Bulgaria was to be a self-governing State tributary to the Sultan and owning his suzerainty, but in other respects practically independent. It was to be governed by a Prince whom the population were to elect with the assent of the Great Powers and the confirmation of the Sultan. It was stipulated that no member of any reigning dynasty of the Great European Powers should be eligible as a candidate. South of the Balkans, the treaty created another and a different kind of State, under the name of Eastern Roumelia. That State was to remain under the direct political and military authority of the Sultan, but it was to have, as to its interior condition, a sort of 'administrative autonomy,' as the favourite diplomatic phrase then was. East Roumelia was to be ruled by a Christian Governor, and there was a stipulation that the Sultan should not employ any irregular troops, such as the Circassians and the Bashi-Bazouks, in the garrisons of the frontier. The European Powers were to arrange in concert with the Porte for the organisation of this new State. As regarded Greece, it

was arranged that the Sultan and the King of the Hellenes were to come to some understanding for a modification of the Greek frontier, and that if they could not arrange this between themselves, the Great Powers were to have the right of offering, that is to say in plain words of insisting on, their mediation. Bosnia and the Herzegovina were to be occupied and administered by Austria. Roumania undertook, or in other words was compelled to undertake, to return to Russia that portion of Bessarabian territory which had been detached from Russia by the Treaty of Paris. Roumania was to receive in compensation some islands forming the Delta of the Danube, and a portion of the Dobrudscha. As regarded Asia, the Porte was to cede to Russia, Ardahan, Kars, and Batoum, with its great port on the Black Sea.

The Treaty of Berlin gave rise to keen and adverse criticism. Very bitter indeed was the controversy provoked by the surrender to Russia of the Bessarabian territory taken from her at the time of the Crimean War. Russia had regained everything which she had been compelled to sacrifice at the close of the Crimean War. The Black Sea was open to her war vessels, and its shores to her arsenals. The last slight trace of Crimean humiliation was effaced in the restoration of the territory of Bessarabia. Profound disappointment was caused among many European populations, as well as among the Greeks themselves, by the arrangements for the rectification of the Greek frontier. Thus, speaking roughly, it may be said that the effect of the Congress of Berlin on the mind of Europe was to make the Christian populations of the south-east believe that their friend was Russia and their enemies were England and Turkey; to make the Greeks believe that France was their especial friend, and that England was their enemy; and to create an uncomfortable impression everywhere that the whole Congress was a prearranged business, a transaction with a foregone conclusion, a dramatic performance carefully rehearsed before in all its details and merely enacted as a pageant on the Berlin stage.

The latter impression was converted into a conviction by certain subsequent revelations. It came out that Lord Beaconsfield and Lord Salisbury had been entering into secret engagements both with Russia and with Turkey. The secret engagement with Russia was prematurely divulged by the heedlessness or the treachery of a person who had been

called in at a small temporary rate of pay to assist in copying despatches in the Foreign Office. It bound England to put up with the handing back of Bessarabia and the cession of the port of Batoum. It conceded all the points in advance which the English people believed that their plenipotentiaries had been making brave struggle for at Berlin. Lord Beaconsfield had not then frightened Russia into accepting the Congress on his terms. The call of the Indian troops to Malta had not done the business; nor the reserves, nor the vote of the six millions. Russia had gone into the Congress because Lord Salisbury had made a secret engagement with her that she should have what she specially wanted. The Congress was only a piece of pompous and empty ceremonial. By another secret engagement entered into with Turkey, the English Government undertook to guarantee to Turkey her Asiatic possessions against all invasion on condition that Turkey handed over to England the island of Cyprus for her occupation. The difference, therefore, between the policy of the Conservative Government and the policy of the Liberals was now thrown into the strongest possible relief. Mr. Gladstone, and those who thought with him, had always made it a principle of their policy that England had no special and separate interest in maintaining the independence of Turkey. Lord Beaconsfield now declared it to be the cardinal principle of his policy that England specially, England above all, was concerned to maintain the integrity and the independence of the Turkish Empire; that in fact the security of Turkey was as much part of the duty of English statesmanship as the security of the Channel Islands or of Malta.

For the moment the policy of Lord Beaconsfield seemed to be entirely in the ascendant. His return home was celebrated with great pomp and circumstance. He made a conquering hero's progress through the streets of London. Arrived at the Foreign Office, he addressed from the windows an excited and tumultuous crowd, and he proclaimed, in words which became memorable, that he had brought back 'Peace with Honour.' At this moment he was probably the most conspicuous public man in the world, unless we make one single exception in favour of Prince Bismarck. He had attained to a position of almost unrivalled popularity in England. He ought to have followed classic advice and sacrificed at that moment his dearest possession to the gods. No man without sacrifice could buy the lease of such a position and

the endurance of such a success. Meanwhile, so far as could be judged by external symptoms, and in the metropolis, Mr. Gladstone and his followers were down to their lowest depth, their very zero of unpopularity. The majority of the London newspapers were entirely on the side of Lord Beaconsfield. In the provinces, on the whole, Liberalism still remained popular. Mr. Gladstone would still have been sure of the cheers of a great provincial meeting. But there came a day in London when, passing with his wife through one of the streets, he was compelled to seek the shelter of a friendly hall-door in order to escape from the threatening demonstrations of a little mob of patriots boisterously returning from a Jingo carnival.

During the excitement caused by the preparations for the Congress of Berlin a long career came quietly to a close. On May 28, 1878, Lord Russell died at his residence, Pembroke Lodge, Richmond. He may be said to have faded out of life, to have ceased to live, rather than to have died, so quiet, gradual, almost imperceptible was the passing away. He had not for some time taken any active part in public affairs. Now and then some public event aroused his attention, and he addressed a letter to one of the newspapers. To the last moments of his life Lord Russell refused to surrender wholly his concern in the affairs of men. The world listened respectfully to these few occasional words from one who had borne a leader's part in some of the greatest political struggles of the century, and who still from the very edge of the grave was anxious to offer his whisper of counsel or of warning. His had been on the whole a great career. He had not only lived through great changes, he had helped to accomplish some of the greatest changes his time had known. His life was singularly unselfish. He was often eager and pushing where he believed that he saw his way to do something needful, and men confounded the zeal of a cause with the eagerness of personal ambition. He never cared for money, and his original rank raised him above any possible consideration for enhanced social distinction. He had made many mistakes; but those who knew him best prized most highly both his political capacity and his personal character. His later years were made happy and smooth by all that the love of a household could do. He had lost a son, a young man of much political promise, Lord Amberley, who died in 1876; but on the whole he had suffered less in his later time than is commonly the lot

of those who live to extreme old age. The time of his death was in a certain sense appropriate. His public career had just begun at the time of the Congress of Vienna; it closed with the preparations for the Congress of Berlin.

Why did not Lord Beaconsfield sacrifice to the gods his dearest possession, his political majority, immediately after the triumphal return from Berlin? The opinion of nearly all who pretended to form a judgment was, that at that time the great majority of the constituencies were with him. It is said that he was strongly advised by some of his northern supporters not to put the country then to the cost of a general election. Whatever the reason may have been, the expected dissolution did not take place, and from that time Lord Beaconsfield never had any chance of a successful appeal to the country. From that time the popularity of his Government began to go down and down. Trade was depressed. The badness of trade and the general depression were no fault of the Administration, but the Government aggravated every evil of this kind by the strain on which they kept the expectation of the country. Their domestic policy had not been successful. They had attempted many large measures and failed to carry them through. They had not satisfied the country party, to whom they owed so much. The malt tax remained a grievance, as it had been for generations. The Government had got into trouble with the Home Rule party. Mr. Parnell, a young man but lately come into Parliament, soon proved himself the most remarkable politician who had arisen on the field of Irish politics since the day when John Mitchel was conveyed away from Dublin to Bermuda. The tactics adopted by Mr. Parnell annoyed and discredited the Government. The country blamed the Ministry, it scarcely knew why, for the manner in which the policy called obstructive had been allowed to come into force. It was evident that a new chapter in Irish agitation was opening, and those who disliked the prospect felt inclined to lay the blame on the Government, as if, because they happened to be in office, they must be responsible for everything that took place during their official reign. Most of all, the Ministry suffered from the effect produced upon the country by the smaller wars into which they plunged.

The first of these was the invasion of Afghanistan. The Government determined to send a mission to Shere Ali, one of the sons of Dost Mohammed, and then the ruler of Cabul,

in order to guard against Russian intrigue by establishing a distinct and paramount influence in Afghanistan. Shere Ali strongly objected to receive either a mission or a permanent Resident. The mission was sent forward. It was so numerous as to look rather like an army than an embassy. It started from Peshawur on September 21, 1878, but was stopped on the frontier by an officer of Shere Ali, who objected to its passing through until he had received authority from his master. This delay was magnified, by the news first received here, into an insolent rebuff. The Envoy was ordered to go on, and before long the mission was turned into an invasion. The Afghans made but a poor resistance, and the English troops soon occupied Cabul. Shere Ali fled from his capital. One portion of our forces occupied Candahar. Shere Ali died, and Yakoob Khan, his son, became his successor. Yakoob Khan presented himself at the British camp which had now been established at Gandamak, a place between Jellalabad and Cabul. Here the Treaty of Gandamak was signed on May 5, 1879. The Indian Government undertook by this treaty to pay the Ameer 60,000*l.* a year, and the Ameer ceded, or appeared to cede, what Lord Beaconsfield called the 'scientific frontier,' and agreed to admit a British representative to reside in Cabul. On those conditions he was to be supported against any foreign enemy with money and arms, and, if necessary, with men. Hardly had the country ceased clapping its hands and exulting over the quiet establishment of an English Resident at Cabul when a telegram arrived announcing that the events of November 1841 had repeated themselves in that city. The tragedy of Sir Alexander Burnes was enacted over again. A popular rising took place in Cabul exactly as had happened in 1841. Sir Louis Cavagnari, the English Envoy, and all or nearly all the members of his staff, were murdered. There was nothing to be done for it but invade Cabul over again, and take vengeance for the massacre of the English officers. The British troops hurried up, fought their way with their usual success, and on the Christmas Eve of 1879 Cabul was again entered. Yakoob Khan, accused of complicity in the massacre, was sent as a prisoner to India. Cabul was occupied, but not possessed. The English Government held in their power just as much of Afghanistan as they could cover with their encampments. They held it for just so long as they kept the encampments standing. The Treaty of Gandamak was of course nothing but waste paper.

The war in South Africa was, if possible, less justifiable. It was also, if possible, more disastrous. The region which we call South Africa consisted of several States, native and European, under various forms of authority. Cape Colony and Natal were for a long time the only English dominions. The Orange Free State and the Transvaal Republic were Dutch settlements. In 1848, the British Government had established its authority over the Orange River territory, but it afterwards transferred its powers to a provisional Government of Dutch origin. The Transvaal was a Dutch Republic with which we had until quite lately no direct connection. In 1852, the English Government resolved that its operations and its responsibilities in South Africa should be limited to Cape Colony and Natal, and distinctly recognised the independence of the Orange Free State and the Transvaal Republic. Besides these States of what we may call European origin, there were a great many native communities, some which had enough of organisation to be almost regarded as States. The Kaffirs had often given us trouble before. The most powerful tribe in South Africa was that of the Zulus. Natal was divided from Zulu territory only by the River Tugela. The ruler of the Zulu tribe, Cetewayo, was much inclined to a cordial alliance with the English, and although he did not owe his power in any direct sense to us, yet he went through a form, in which our representatives bore their part, of accepting his crown at the hands of the English Sovereign. He was often involved in disputes with the Boers, or Dutch-descended occupants of the Transvaal Republic. Other native tribes were still more directly and often engaged in quarrels with the Boers. The Transvaal Republic made war upon one of the greatest of these African chiefs, Secocoeni, and had the worst of it in the struggle. The Republic was badly managed in every way. Its military operations were a total failure; its exchequer was ruined; there seemed hardly any chance of maintaining order within its frontier, and the prospect appeared at the time to be that its South African enemies would overrun the whole of the Republic, would thus come up to the borders of the English States, and possibly might soon involve the English settlers themselves in war. Under these conditions a certain number of disappointed or alarmed inhabitants of the Transvaal made some kind of indirect proposition to England that the Republic should be annexed to English territory. Sir Theophilus Shepstone was sent out by England to ascertain

whether this offer was genuine and national. He seems to have been entirely mistaken in his appreciation of the condition of things, and he boldly declared the Republic a portion of the dominions of Great Britain. Meanwhile there had been a controversy going on for a long time between Cetewayo and the Transvaal Republic about a certain disputed strip of land. The dispute was referred to the arbitration of England, with whom Cetewayo was then on the most friendly terms. Four English arbitrators decided that the disputed strip of territory properly belonged to the Zulu nation.

Meanwhile, Sir Bartle Frere was sent out as Lord High Commissioner. From the moment of his appearance on the scene the whole state of affairs seems to have undergone a complete change. Sir Bartle Frere kept back the award of the arbitrators for several months, unwilling to hand over any new territory unconditionally to Cetewayo, whom he regarded as a dangerous enemy and an unscrupulous despot. During this time a hostile feeling was growing up in the mind of Cetewayo. He appears to have really become mastered by the conviction that the English were determined to find a pretext for making war on him, for annexing his territory, and for sending him to prison, as had been done to another South African chief, Langalibalele, in 1874. Sir Bartle Frere was a man who had many times rendered great service to England. He had been Chief Commissioner in Scinde from 1852 to 1859, and had shown great ability and energy during the Indian Mutiny. Since that he had been one of the Council of the Viceroy of India; he had been for some years Governor of Bombay, and he had been appointed to the Council of the Secretary of State here at home. He had been sent upon an important mission to the Sultan of Zanzibar in 1872, the object of which was to endeavour to obtain the suppression of the slave trade, and he succeeded. Sir Bartle Frere seems to have been really filled with that imperial instinct about which other men only talked. His was a strong nature with an imperious will and an inexhaustible energy. He was undoubtedly conscientious and high-principled according to his lights. He appears to have been influenced by two strong ambitions: to spread the Gospel and to extend the territory of England. In Africa his mind appears to have become at once possessed with the conviction that alike for the safety of the whites and the improvement of the coloured races it would be necessary to extend the government of England over the

whole southern portion of that continent, and to efface the boundaries of native tribes by blending them all into one imperial confederation.

Cetewayo's position made him a rival to Sir Bartle Frere's policy, and Sir Bartle Frere appears to have made up his mind that these two stars were not to keep their motion in one sphere, and that South Africa was not to brook the double rule of the English Commissioner and the Zulu king. Sir Bartle Frere kept the award of the four English arbitrators in his hands for some months without taking any action upon it, and when he did at length announce it to Cetewayo, he accompanied it with an ultimatum declaring that the Zulu army must at once be disbanded and must return to their homes. This was in point of fact a declaration of war. The English troops immediately invaded Zulu country, and almost the first news that reached England of the progress of the war was the story of the complete and terrible defeat of an English force on January 22, 1879. Not within the memory of any living man had so sudden and sweeping a disaster fallen upon English arms. Englishmen were wholly unused to the very idea of English troops being defeated in the field. The story that an English force had been surprised and outgeneraled, out-fought, completely defeated by half-naked savages, came on the country with a shock never felt since at least the time of the disasters of Cabul and the Jugdulluk Pass. Of course the disaster was retrieved. Lord Chelmsford, the Commander-in-Chief (son of the Lord Chelmsford just dead, who had been twice Lord Chancellor), only wanted time, in homely language, to pull himself together in order to recover his position. The war soon came to the end which everyone must have expected, first the defeat of the Zulu king and then his capture. Cetewayo's territory was divided amongst the leading native chiefs. A portion of it was given to an Englishman, John Dunn, who had settled in the country very young, and who had become a sort of potentate among the Zulus.

One melancholy incident made the war memorable not only to England but to Europe. The young French Prince Louis Napoleon, who had studied in English military schools, had attached himself as a volunteer to Lord Chelmsford's staff. During one of the episodes of the war he and some of his companions were surprised by a body of Zulus. Others escaped, but Prince Louis Napoleon was killed.

The war, although it had ended in a practical success, was none the less regarded by the English public as a blunder and a disaster. Even the Afghan enterprise, objectionable though it was in almost every way, did not affect the popularity of the Government so much as the Zulu war. The plain common sense of England held that Sir Bartle Frere, however high and conscientious his motives may have been, was in the wrong from first to last, and that the cause of Cetewayo was on the whole a cause of fairness and of justice. On the Government fell the burden of Sir Bartle Frere's responsibilities, without Sir Bartle Frere's consoling and self-sufficing belief in the justice of his cause and the genuineness of his enterprise.

The distress in the country was growing deeper and deeper day by day. Some of the most important trades were suffering heavily. The winter of 1878 had been long and bitter, and there had been practically no summer. The manufacturing and mining districts almost everywhere over the country were borne down by the failure of business. The working classes were in genuine distress. In Ireland there was a forecast of something almost approaching to famine. When distress affects the trade and the population of a country, the first impulse is always to find fault with the reigning Government. The authority of the Government in the House of Commons was greatly shaken. Sir Stafford Northcote had not the strength necessary to make a successful leader. The result was that the House was becoming demoralised. The Government brought in a scheme for university education in Ireland, which was nothing better than a mutilation of Mr. Gladstone's rejected bill. It was carried through both Houses in a few weeks, because the Government were anxious to do something which might have the appearance of conciliating the Irish people without going far enough in that direction to estrange their Conservative supporters. The measure thus devised had exactly the opposite effect from that which was intended. It estranged a good many Conservative supporters; it roused a new feeling of hostility amongst the Nonconformists, and it did not concede enough to the demands of the Irish Catholics to be of any use in the way of conciliation. It was plain that the mandate, to use a French phrase, of the Parliament was nearly out. The session of 1879 was its sixth session; it would only be possible to have one session more. Louder and louder grew the cry from the

Liberal side for the Government at once to go to the country. Thus the winter passed on. Two or three elections which occurred meantime resulted in favour of the Conservatives. There was a little renewal of confidence among the friends of Lord Beaconsfield, and a sudden sinking of the spirits among most of the Liberals. Parliament met in February, and the Government gave it to be understood that they intended to have what one of them called 'a fair working session.' Suddenly, however, they made up their minds that it would be convenient to accept Mr. Gladstone's challenge, and to dissolve in the Easter holidays. The dissolution took place on March 24, 1880, and the elections began.

With the very first day of the elections it was evident that the Conservative majority was already gone. Each succeeding day showed more and more the change that had taken place in public feeling. Defeat was turned into disaster. Disaster became utter rout and confusion. When the elections were over it was found that the Conservative party were nowhere. A majority of some hundred and twenty sent the Liberals back into power. No Liberal statesmen in our time ever before saw themselves sustained by such an army of followers. There was a moment or two of hesitation—of delay. The Queen sent for Lord Hartington, she then sent for Lord Granville; but everyone knew in advance who was to come into office at last. The strife lately carried on had been the old duel between two great men. Mr. Gladstone had stood up against Lord Beaconsfield for some years and fought him alone. He had dragged his party after him into many a danger. He had compelled them more than once to fight when many of them would fain have held back, and where none of them saw any chance of victory. Now, at last, the battle had been given to his hands, and it was a matter of necessity that the triumph should bring back to power the man whose energy and eloquence had inspired the struggle. The Queen sent for Mr. Gladstone, and a new chapter of English history opened, with the opening of which this work has to close.

INDEX.

ABD

ABD-EL-KADER, saves Christians in Damascus, 237
Abdul-Aziz in England, 327–28
Aberdeen, Lord, Foreign Secretary, 31; and Pacifico case, 97; Prime Minister Coalition Ministry, 1852, 128; conversations with Czar Nicholas, 136; dislike of war, 146; and Crimean War, 162
Aborigines Protection Society and Jamaica question, 282
Abyssinian war, 334–39
Acre, bombardment of, 30
Adams and *Alabama*, 247; and recognition of South meaning war, 248–49
Adullamites, the, 291; and Lord Derby, 294
Afghanistan, war in, 1841-42, 44–57,
Afghans in Sikh war, 175; war in, 425–26
Agricultural labourer, the, 383–86
Akbar Khan, son of Dost Mohammed, 48; kills Macnaghten, 49; treating with English, 50; interview with Lady Macnaghten, 52; defeated, 54
Alabama, Confederate privateer, 246–48, 251; claims, 374–78
Alamayou, son of Theodore of Abyssinia, death of, 339
Alexander II. comes to Russian throne, 157; and Constantinople, 415
Alexandra, Princess, married to Prince of Wales, 258–59
Allen and Manchester rescue, 317
Alma, battle of, 147–48
Alsace yielded to Germany, 372

AUS

America and Foreign Legion Act, 161; and Congress of Paris, 161; civil war in, 239–251; *Alabama* claims, 374–78
Andrassy Note, 411–12
Anne, Queen, and Scotch Church, 34
Anson, advances on Delhi, 180
Anti-Corn Law League, 68; its leaders, 69–72; agitation of, 72–75; conversion of Peel, 75–77; Disraeli's opposition, 78–84
Anti-Slavery Society and Jamaica question, 282
Arch, Joseph, 384–86
Argyll, Duke of, 278–79; Indian Office, 351
Arnaud, St., and Crimea, 147; death of, 158
Arrow, the Lorcha, 164–67
Artisans' Dwelling Bill, 404
Ashantee War, 253, 396–97
Ashburton Treaty, 66
Ashley, Lord—*see* Shaftesbury
Atlantic cable, 164; laid, 298–99
Antonelli, sympathy with North, 242
Auckland, Lord, and Dost Mohammed, 46; succeeded by Lord Ellenborough, 54
Austria, war with Prussia, mentioned, 4; and Turkish war with Mohammed Ali, 30; Hungarian rebellion, 113; Kossuth in England, 114–15; war with France, 217–18, 221; and Polish insurrection, 255–56; war with Prussia, 298; war with Denmark, 357–60
Australia, discovery of gold in, 168; and transportation, 168

AUS

Australian Islands, the, 309–10
Ayrton, Mr., unpopularity of, 371
Azimoolah Khan, in England, 183–84; makes terms with Cawnpore garrison, 186

BALAKLAVA, battle of, 150
Ballot Bill of 1871, 368–70
Ballot, vote by, demanded by Chartists, 18
Bank Charter Act, 64
Baring, Mr., budget of, 30–31
—, —, and Bulgarian atrocities, 413
Baxter, Mr., resigns Secretaryship, Treasury, 395
Beaconsfield—*see* Disraeli
Beale, James, advises Mill to stand for Westminster, 269
Beales, Mr. E., and Polish insurrection, 255; and reform meeting, Hyde Park, 295–97
Bean, attempts life of Queen, 43
Bedchamber question, the, 37–39
Bentinck, Lord George, forms protection party, 82; and sugar duties, 87
Bentinck, Lord W., suppression of Suttee, 175
Berar, annexation of, 175
Berlin Memorandum, 412; Treaty of, 421–22
Bernard, Mr. M., and *Alabama* commission, 376
Bernard, Simon, accomplice of Orsini, trial of, 201, 204–205
Bessarabia ceded to Russia, 422–23
Beyrout, massacre in, 237
Birmingham, Radical meeting in, in 1837, 16; Chartist riot in, 19; manufacture of Orsini bombs at, 201
Bismarck and Schleswig-Holstein question, 257; and Black Sea Clause, 373–74; Congress of Berlin, 420–21
Black Sea neutralised, 160; clause abrogated, 373–74
Blanc, Dr., Abyssinian prisoner, 335, 337
Bokhara, Burnes's travels in, 45; English prisoners in, 56–57
Borough franchise and Mr. Gladstone, 264
Bosnia, rising in, 410–11; and treaty of Berlin in, 422
Bosphorus, no foreign ship of war

BUC

admitted into, 30; question of, 144–45; and Congress of Paris, 160
Bosquet, General, on Charge of Light Brigade, 150
Bourke, Mr., and Irish University Bill, 393
Bowlby, Mr., murdered by Chinese, 235
Bowring, Sir John, and Lorcha *Arrow*, 165, 167
Bramwell, Baron, and ticket of leave system, 169
Bright, John, and Anti-Corn Law League, 71, 72; on Irish famine, 74; and Ecclesiastical Titles Act, 103; and Peace Society, 146; unseated, 167, 209; Disraeli's Reform Bill, 219; and 'Fancy Franchises,' 220; at Willis's Rooms, 221; and Palmerston Ministry, 224; and Lords on Paper Duty, 229–30; and *Alabama*, 247; on Cobden's death, 267; and new Parliament, 1865, 271; and Adullamites, 291; and reform agitation, 1866, 295; and Disraeli's reform by resolution, 300; on suspension *Habeas Corpus* in Ireland, 311; and Manchester prisoners, 317; and Irish State Church, 343–44; President, Board of Trade, 350; Chancellor, Duchy of Lancaster, 395; and leadership, 405; and Bulgarian atrocities, 413
British Columbia, founded by Lytton, 215; and confederation, 307
Broadhead and Sheffield outrages, 319–21
Brougham, Lord, character of, 6–7; and sugar duties, 87; and Pacifico case, 97; opposes Great Exhibition, 107; and Jews, 210; death of, 348–49
Bruce, Abyssinian traveller, 335
Bruce, Frederick, and Chinese war, 1859–60, 233–35
Bruce, in Gladstone ministry, 1868, 351; and Parliamentary Elections Committee, 369; and liquor question, 381; leaves Home Office, 394; becomes Lord Aberdare, 395
Brydon, Dr., the last man of the army of Cabul, 53; in siege of Lucknow, 194
Buccleuch, Duke of, opposed to repeal of corn law, 75

BUC

Buckingham, Duke of, Colonial Secretary, 303
Bulgaria, insurrection in, 410; the atrocities, 410–14; and Treaty of Berlin, 421
Bull Run, battle of, 241
Buller, Charles, in Parliament of 1837, 8
Burdett, Sir F., and Dundonald, 239
Burke, Colonel, 316
Burnes, Alexander, in Afghanistan, 45; mutilation of despatches, 46; murder of, 48
Butt, Isaac, and home rule, 390–91
Byron controversy, 389

CABUL, proverb concerning, 45; Burnes at, 45; entry of Shah Soojah, 47; withdrawal of British army from, 51–53; entered by Pollock, 55; bazaar of, destroyed, 55; Dost Mohammed, in again, 57; murder of Cavagnari in 425
'Cæsar, unemployed,' term applied to Durham, 23
Caffre war, 1850, 120
Cairnes, Professor, opposes Irish University Bill, 393
Cairns, Sir Hugh, after Lord, 209, 279–80; Lord Chancellor, 330
Cambridge, Duke of, and Great Exhibition, 108
Cameron, Captain, Abyssinian prisoner, 335–36
Campbell, Lord, opposes Great Exhibition, 107
—, Sir Colin, at Lucknow, 192; advances on Cawnpore, 193; reconquers Lucknow, 194; announces end of mutiny, 195
Canada, in 1837, 20; Papineau's rebellion, 21; Durham's mission, 22–25; Canadian Government Bill, 25; and confederation, 306–309; Fenian invasion of, 315
Canning, Lord, and Pacifico case, 97; and Peelites, 104; Governor-General India, 174–176; Indian mutiny, 177–78; capture of Delhi, 181; proclamation, 196–98; Viceroy, 200; death, 266
Canrobert at Crimea, 158
Canterbury, Archbishop of, and Princess Victoria's accession, 2; and Public Worship Bill, 399, 400
Canton, Port of, thrown open, 27;

CLO

bombarded, 165; captured, 206–207
Cardwell, and Peelites, 104; on Ellenborough despatch, 197; and Conspiracy Bill, 206; Irish Secretary, 223; unsuccessfully opposed by Thackeray at Oxford, 265; and Jamaica, 282; and Canadian Confederation, 308; War Secretary, 351; war reforms, 363–64
Carlisle, Lord, and Bedchamber question, 37
Carlyle, Thomas, and Jamaica question, 286
Carnarvon, Lord, Colonial Secretary, 1866, 294; Colonial Secretary, 1874, 397; resigns on 'Ten Minutes' Bill, 301–303; resigns, 418
Cashmere and Runjeet Singh, 46
Catherine II. and Treaty of Kutchuk-Kainardji, 138
Catholic emancipation, 58
Cavagnari, Louis, murder of, in Cabul, 425
Cavour and Crimean war, 158; and Congress of Paris, 161; and Napoleon's Italian policy, 201, 217–18; sympathy with North, 242; compared with Bismarck, 257
Cawnpore, story of, 182–191
Cecil—*see* Salisbury
Cetewayo, 427–29
Chalmers, Dr., 34–35
Chartism, 16–19; 88–91
Chelmsford, Lord, and Ecclesiastical Titles Bill, 105; and Lorcha *Arrow*, 166; removed from woolsack, 330–31; and Abyssinian prisoners, 335
—, General Lord, in South Africa, 429
Chester Castle, Fenian attack on, 315
Chevalier, Michel, 227
Chimneys, prohibition of children climbing, 28
Childers, Hugh, in Gladstone Ministry, 1868, 351; resigns, 395
Children, regulation of labour of, 28
Chillianwallah, battle of, 175
China, opium war, 25–28; Lorcha *Arrow*, 164–67; war with, 233–37
Chupatties, the, 177
Church Patronage Scotland Bill, 398
Clarendon, Lord, Foreign Secretary, 275, 350; and *Alabama* claims, 374–75
Clerkenwell explosion, 317–18
Clontarf, O'Connell's meeting at, 60

CLY

Clyde, Lord—*see* Campbell, Sir Colin
Coalition Ministry, 128; fall of, 154–55
Cobden, enters Parliament in 1841, 32; Anti-Corn Law League, 69–71; Palmerston's foreign policy, 97; Ecclesiastical Titles Act, 103; Peace Society, 146; Lorcha *Arrow*, 166–67; refuses office under Palmerston, 223–24; commercial treaty with France, 226–27; death of, 267
Cockburn, speech on Pacifico case, 97–98
Cochrane—*see* Dundonald
Coleridge, Samuel, and postal system, 14–15
Collier, Sir Robert, 380
Columbia River and Oregon Treaty, 67
Commercial Treaty with France, 226–27
Conciliation Hall and O'Connell, 60
Condon, or Shore and Manchester rescue, 317
Confederation of North American Provinces, 306–309
Congress of Berlin, 420–21
Conolly, Captain, prisoner in Bokhara, 57
'Conservative,' first use of term, 8
Consort, Prince, marriage of to Queen announced, 39; character, 40; marriage, 41; long unpopular, 42; and duelling system, 42; and Great Exhibition, 106–9; and Palmerston's foreign policy, 111–13; unpopular during Crimean war, 151; and Louis Napoleon, 157; death of, 244–45
Conspiracy to Murder Bill, 199–206; dropped, 209
Constantine, his travelling contrasted with Peel's, 12
Constantinople Conference, 415–16
Conyngham, Lord, and Queen's accession, 2
Cooke, Mr., and electric telegraph, 12
Co-operative societies, 324–27
Copyright question, 64
Corn Laws—*see* Anti-Corn Law League
Corry, Mr., at Admiralty, 303
Coup d'état, 116–18
Cowen, Joseph, and Queen's Title Bill, 408
Cranbourne—*see* Salisbury

DER

Cranbrook, Lord—*see* Hardy, Gathorne
Crete, insurrection in, 327, 410
Crimean war, 132–162; and Sepoy, 176
Criminal law, commission of inquiry into, 28
Crofton, Sir Walter, and ticket-of-leave system, 169
Croker, J. W., and Dundonald, 239
Cross, Mr., Home Secretary, 397; and Artisans' Dwelling Bill, 404
Crystal Palace, 109
Cumberland, Duke of, 4
Cunard Line established, 13
Customs system, 226

DAILY NEWS and Bulgarian atrocities, 412–13
Dalhousie, Lord, in India, 174; disregards Hindoo principle of adoption, 183; death of, 266
Dalling, Lord, 'There was a Palmerston,' 118
Damascus, massacre in, 237
Danube, navigation of thrown open, 160; principalities and Congress of Paris, 161
Dardanelles, no foreign war ships admitted into, 30; question of, 144–45; and Congress of Paris, 160
Davis, Jefferson, President Southern Confederacy, 240; and Confederate navy, 246; captured, 250
Davis, J. C. B., and *Alabama* commission, 376
Davis, Thomas, and 'Young Ireland,' 91
Death, decrease of punishment of, 28
Delhi, mutiny in, 172; princes of, killed by Hodson, 191; old king sent to Rangoon, 195
Denman, Lord, Evidence Act, 210–11
Denmark, war with Prussia and Austria, 257–60
Derby, Lord, the Elder, in Parliament, 1837, 9; character of, 10; Colonial Secretary, 1841, 31; opposed to opening of ports, 74–75; vote of censure in Pacifico case, 96; sent for, 1851, 103; takes office, 121; and protection, 122; fails to form ministry, 155; and Lorcha *Arrow*, 165–66; and Indian Government, 199; new ministry, 207; contrasted with his son, 208; drops Conspiracy Bill, 209; and reform

schemes, 219; and paper duty, 228; on Parliament of 1865, 268; forms ministry, 294; phrase 'Leap in the Dark' wrongly ascribed to, 306; and Manchester prisoners, 317; retirement of, 329; death of, 353–55
Derby, Lord, the Younger, Indian Secretary, 199; Colonial Secretary, 207; contrasted with his father, 208–9; Indian Secretary, 214; Foreign Secretary, 1866, 294; and Atlantic cable, 298; announces his father's retirement, 329; and Abyssinia, 337; and Irish State Church, 344; Foreign Secretary, 1874, 397; and Herzegovina rising, 410; and Andrassy Note, 411; and Berlin Memorandum, 412; and Constantinople Conference, 415; resigns, 418–19
Dickens, Charles, and Jamaica question, 286; death of, 359–60
Dilke, Sir Charles, and republicanism, 382–83
Dillon, John B., and 'Young Ireland,' 93; in Parliament, 270
Dillwyn and Irish State Church, 264
Disraeli, in Parliament of 1837, 8; early career, 79–81; attack on Peel, 81–82; sugar duties, 87; Papal Hierarchy, 101–3; 'There was a Palmerston,' 118; leader of House, 121–22; abandons Protection, 123; Budget of 1852, 127; answered by Gladstone, 128; on coalitions, 154–55, 157; speaking contrasted with G. C. Lewis's, 163; and Lorcha *Arrow*, 166; and Indian Mutiny, 178; and Conspiracy Bill, 202, 205; Chancellor Exchequer, 207, 209; and Jews, 209–10; Reform Bill, 218–21; and Graham, 222; on Lords, 229; on Reform Bill, 231–32; and Danish question, 260–61; and Cobden's death, 267; and new Parliament, 1865, 271; face to face with Gladstone, 277–78; and Lowe, 290–91; Chancellor of Exchequer, 1866, 294; and Reform disturbances, 296; and reform, 299; reform by resolution, 300; the 'Ten Minutes' Bill, 301–3; the new Reform Bill, 303–5; educating his party, 328–29; Prime Minister, 329–31; attacked by Salisbury, 345; dissolves, 346; resigns, 349–50; and Irish State Church, 352–53; and army purchase, 366; and Joseph Arch, 385–86; and Home Rule, 389; Irish University Bill, 393; declines office, 394; Prime Minister, 1874, 397; describes Salisbury as master of jibes and flouts and jeers, 401; Public Worship Bill, 401; and Mr. Plimsoll, 403; contrasted with Gladstone, 405–6; Suez Canal shares, 407; South African confederation, 407; appoints Lytton Viceroy of India, 408; Queen's Title Bill, 408–9; Eastern Question, 409–12; Bulgarian atrocities, 413; becomes Lord Beaconsfield, 414; speech at Aylesbury, 414; and Russia, 415–16; on Derby's resignation, 419; at Congress of Berlin, 420–21; 'Peace with Honour,' 423; popularity of Government on the wane, 425; dissolves, 431
Divorce Act, 167
Dost Mohammed, 45–48, 57
Drouyn de Lhuys and Pacifico case, 96
Druses, 237
Dublin University Tests Bill, 394
Duelling, Prince Consort and, 42
Dufferin, Lord, in Lebanon, 237–38; in Gladstone Ministry, 1868, 351
Duffy, C. G., and 'Young Ireland,' 92, 94
Dundonald, death of, 238–39
Dunn, John, 429
Durham Letter, 101
—, Lord, 22–25, 307–8

EASTERN Question, 132–40; 410–12
East India Company and China, 26; and King of Delhi, 172; and Oude, 175; war with Persia, 176; end of, 198–200
Ecclesiastical Titles Bill, 99–106
Egypt and Mohammed Ali, 29–30; Viceroy in England, 328; purchase of Suez Canal shares, 407
Election petitions, 331–34
Elgin, Lord, and Indian Mutiny, 179; treaty with China, 207; China war, 233, 235–36; death of, 266
Ellenborough, Lord, Governor-General of India, 54; character of, 54–55; proclamation of, 57; annexes Scinde, 65; on Canning's procla-

ELL

mation, 197; Indian Secretary, 207, 214; Polish insurrection, 255
Elliott, Captain, and opium war, 27
— Sir Henry, and Constantinople Conference, 415; transferred to Vienna, 417
Elphinstone, General, and Cabul rising, 48, 50, 53; death of, 56
Emmet, Robert, and O'Connell, 59
Executions, public, abolished, 33
Exeter, Conservative victory at in 1875, 395
Exhibition, Great, 106–9; of 1862, 251
Evangelicals, the, 399
Eyre, Governor, and Jamaica, 282–87

FACTORY ACTS, 141
'Fancy Franchises,' 220
Fawcett, Mr., and army purchase, 367; Dublin University Tests Bill, 394
Fenian movement, 312–19
Field, Cyrus W., and Atlantic cable, 164, 298–99
Finlay, Mr., and Greek Government, 95
Fish, Hamilton and *Alabama* commission, 376
Fishery question, Canadian, 376–77
Fitzgerald, Lord Edward, and O'Connell, 59, 312
Florida, Confederate privateer, 245
Forbes, Archibald, 148
Foreign Legion Act, 161
Forster, W. E., Under-Secretary Colonies, 275–76, 278; Vice-President Council, 351; Education Bill, 360–63; Ballot Bill, 368–69; and leadership, 405
Fortescue, Chichester, Irish Secretary, 275
Fowke, Captain, and Exhibition, 1862, 251
Fox, W. J., and Anti-Corn Law League, 72; unseated, 167
—, Charles James, on government of Ireland, 349
France and Mohammed Ali, 80; Tahiti, 66; Pacifico case, 96; death of Louis Philippe, 99; Louis Napoleon, 115; *coup d'état*, 117; Crimean war, 143–147; Orsini plot, 202; war with Austria, 217–18, 221; Commercial Treaty, 226–227; Chinese war, 235–36; and

GLA

Lebanon, 237–38; sympathy with South, 242; Mexico, 249–50; Polish insurrection, 255–56; war with Prussia, 371–72
Francis, John, attempts life of Queen, 43
Franklin, Sir John, last expedition, 67
Frere, Sir Bartle, and South Africa, 428–30
Free Trade, 58, 68–84, 122
Froude, James Anthony, 32; and South Africa, 407
—, Richard Hurrell, and Oxford movement, 32
Fuad Pasha and Lebanon outrages, 238

GANDAMAK, Treaty of, 426
Gaol system, improvement of, 28
Garibaldi, on Gladstone and Poerio, 131, 268, 328
Genoa, death of O'Connell at, 62
George III., 2
Gettysburgh, battle of, 249
Gibson, Milner, and Anti-Corn Law League, 72; and Lorcha *Arrow*, 166; unseated, 167; and Conspiracy Bill, 205–206; offered place by Palmerston, 223–24; unseated, 347
'Gigantic innovation,' phrase of Gladstone's, 230
Gordon, G. W., and Jamaica, 281–82, 285–86, 287
Gortschakoff, General, withdraws from Sebastopol, 159
—, Prince, and Polish insurrection, 256
Goschen, Vice-President Board of Trade, 275; and leadership, 405
Gosford, Lord, and Canadian rebellion, 21
Gough, Sir Hugh, afterwards Lord, and opium war, 27; and Sikh war, 66, 175
Gladstone, Mr., in parliament of 1837, 9; not in cabinet, 1841, 32; Maynooth grant, 63; and Palmerston's foreign policy, 97; and Ecclesiastical Titles Act, 108; and Peelites, 104; and Ecclesiastical Titles Bill, 105; Chancellor of Exchequer, Coalition Ministry, 128; attacks Disraeli's budget, 1852, 128; character and early career of, 128–

31; Poerio protest, 131; objection to war, 146; resists Roebuck's Crimean motion, 154; resigns, 156; speaking contrasted with G. C. Lewis's, 163; and Lorcha *Arrow*, 166; opposes Divorce Act, 167; Conspiracy Bill, 206, 209; Ionian Islands, 216–17; Chancellor of Exchequer, 223; Paper Duty, 227, 231; and Palmerston on war, 252; his financial policy made use of by Palmerston, 261; his advance towards Radicalism, 262–64; elected South Lancashire, 271; face to face with Disraeli, 277–78; leader in Commons, 276; and Reform Bill, 1866, 282–92; resigns, 292; and Reform agitation, 295; defeated South Lancashire, elected Greenwich, 346; resolutions on Irish State Church, 343–46; Prime Minister, 350; disestablishment Irish Church, 351–55; land question, 355–57; Land Bill, 358; abolishes Army Purchase, 364–68; growing unpopularity, 379–80; Home Rule movement, 391; Irish University Education Bill, 391–94; resigns and returns to office, 394; dissolves Parliament and resigns, 396; retires from leadership, 398; and Public Worship Bill, 400; religious controversy, 405; contrasted with Disraeli, 406; Bulgarian atrocities, 413–14; and Jingo mob, 424; Prime Minister, 431

Graham, Sir James, Home Secretary, 31; Mazzini's letters, 65; Ecclesiastical Titles Act, 103; and Peelites, 104; resigns, 156; Conspiracy Bill, 206, 209; 'Red Indian of debate,' 222; death of, 266

Grant, Sir Hope, at Cawnpore, 194; and China war, 1859–60, 235

—, Sir J. P., sent to Jamaica, 287

—, Robert, and Jews, 210

—, U. S., takes Vicksburg, 249

Granville, Lord, Foreign Secretary, 117; unable to form ministry, 222–23; Colonial Secretary, 350; sent for, 431

Great Western, Transatlantic voyage of, 12

Greece, Pacifico case, 95–96; and Ionian islands, 216–17; and Treaty of Berlin, 421–22

Greenwood, Mr. F., and Suez Canal shares, 407

Gretna Green, marriage of Lord Durham at, 22; marriages made illegal, 170

Grey, General, and Mr. Disraeli, 329–30

Grey, Sir George, Home Secretary, 84; ticket of leave system, 170; suspension of *Habeas Corpus* in Ireland, 311

Grey, Lord, influence of Lord Durham over, 22; Colonial Secretary, 84; ticket of leave system, 168–69; Reform Bill, 220

Gros, Baron, treaty with China, 207, 233, 235

Grote, Mr., in Parliament of 1837, 8

Guizot and Mohammed Ali, 30; Spanish marriages, 87

Gulliver, allusion to, 37

Gurney, Russell, and Public Worship Bill, 399

Gwalior in Indian mutiny, 194–95

HALL, SIR BENJAMIN, and Jews, 211–12

Hamilton, attempts life of Queen, 43

Hanover, and British crown, 4–5

Harcourt, Sir William, and Public Worship Bill, 400–401; and leadership, 405

Hardy, Mr. Gathorne, afterwards Lord Cranbrook, 280; Home Secretary, 306; Irish State Church, 344, 353; War Secretary, 397; on Cowen's speech on Queen's Title Bill, 408; Lord Cranbrook, 420

Hartington, Lord, at Willis's Rooms, 221–22; defeated North Lancashire, 346; elected Radnor Boroughs, 346–47; in Gladstone ministry, 1868, 351; chosen leader, 405; sent for, 431

Hastings, Warren, 198

Hatherley, Lord, Lord Chancellor, 351; resigns, 391

Hatteras, defeated by *Alabama*, 246

Havelock, Sir Henry, Indian mutiny. 179; marches on Cawnpore, 189; relieves Lucknow, 192; death of, 193

Head, Sir F., Canadian Confederation, 308

Henley, Mr., President, Board of Trade, 207; resignation, 220

HEN

Hennessy, Sir John Pope, and Polish insurrection, 255
Herat, Prince of and Dost Mohammed, 45; besieged by Persia, 176
Herbert, Auberon, and Republicanism, 383; and Joseph Arch, 385
—, Sidney, and Pacifico case, 97; and Peelites, 104; asks Miss Nightingale to go to Crimea, 152; resigns, 156; and Lorcha *Arrow*, 166; Conspiracy Bill, 206, 209; at Willis's Rooms, 221; War Minister, 223; death of, 266
Herzegovina, rising in, 410–11; and Treaty of Berlin, 422
Hicks-Beach, Sir Michael, Colonial Secretary, 420
Hill, Matthew Davenport, prison reformer, 14
—, Sir Rowland, postal system, 14–16
—, Thomas Wright, father of Rowland Hill, 14
Hindostan, proverb concerning, 45—*see* India
Hoar, Mr. E. R., and *Alabama* commission, 376
Hodson, of 'Hodson's Horse,' kills Delhi princes, 191–92
Holkar, in Indian mutiny, 194
Holland, Sir Henry, death of, 388
Holy places, 137–40
Home Rule movement, 389–91
Hope, Admiral, and Chinese War, 1859–60, 234
—, Beresford, and Ecclesiastical Titles Act, 103
Howley, Dr., 2
Hudson's Bay Territories, 307, 309
Hughes, Thomas, elected Lambeth, 270
Hungary, Kossuth's rebellion in, 113–15
Hunt, Ward, censure on Westbury, 268; Chancellor of Exchequer, 331; Admiralty, 397; navy scare, 398
Hutt, Mr., 275
Huxley, Professor, and Jamaica question, 286; and School Board, 363
Hyde Park, reform meetings in, 295–97; 305

IBRAHIM PASHA, 29–30
Income-tax established on present basis by Peel, 64

JUA

India, the mutiny, 170; former mutinies, 172; Hindoos and Mohammedans, 173–75; the Chupatties, 177; Canning, 178–79; Punjaub saved, 179–80; death of Henry Lawrence, 181; Cawnpore, 182–91; Hodson, of 'Hodson's Horse,' kills Delhi princes, 191; Lucknow relieved, 192; death of Havelock, 193; the Ranee of Jhansi, 194; end of mutiny, 195; Canning's proclamation, 196–97; end of John Company, 198–200; troops sent from, 419–20
Inkerman, battle of, 150–51
Ionian islands, 216–17
Ireland, potato famine in, 1845, 74, 85–87; O'Connell, 57–62; 'Young Ireland,' 91–94; Ecclesiastical Titles Bill, 104–5; political riots in, 123; ticket-of-leave system, 169; suspension of *Habeas Corpus*, 311; Fenian movement, 312–19; Irish Church question, 339–42; Mr. Maguire's motion, 342; Mr. Gladstone's resolutions, 343–46; University Education Bill, 391–94; famine, 450
Irish Brigade, 163
Isandlana, defeat of, 429
Italy and Crimean war, 156, 158, 161; and Franco-Austrian war, 217–18, 221; and war between Austria and Prussia, 298

JACOB, Colonel, and Indian mutiny, 179
Jamaica, proposed suspension of Constitution, 36; Jamaica Bill, 39; disturbance in, 281–88
James, Edwin, and Bernard trial, 204
Japan, murder of Mr. Richardson, 253–54; bombardment of Kagosima, 254; insurrection in, 254
Jellalabad, Sale at, 52; arrival of Brydon at, 53; defeat of Akbar Khan before, 54
Jews, disabilities of, 28, 64, 210–14
Jhansi, annexation of, 175; Ranee of, death of, 194
Jingoes, the, 418
John Company—*see* East India Company
John, Prince of Denmark, 259
Johnson, Reverdy, and *Alabama* claims, 374–75
Juarez, Benito, and Mexico, 249–50

KAGOSIMA, bombardment of, 254
Kars, siege of, 159, 160, 417
Kearsarge defeats *Alabama*, 246
Keble, and Oxford Movement, 32, 34
Kennington Common and Chartism, 89–90
Kent, Duke of, 2; and Canadian Confederation, 308
Kickham, C. J., 314
King, Mr. Locke, and county franchise, 103; and property qualification, 214
Kinglake, Mr., and Conspiracy Bill, 203, 205
Kingsley, Canon, and Jamaica question, 286
Koh-i-noor diamond, 175
Kossuth, Louis, 113–15, 328
Kuper, Admiral, bombards Kagosima, 254
Kutchuk-Kainardji, Treaty of, 138–40

LABOUCHERE, Mr. (afterwards Lord Taunton), and Canadian Confederation, 308
Laird and *Alabama*, 246–47
Landseer, death of, 388
Langalibalele, 428
Larkin, and Manchester rescue, 317
Lavalette, M., and holy places, 138
Lawrence, Sir Henry, 179; death of, 181–82, 182–83
—, Lord, and Punjaub, 179–80; and School Boards, 363
Layard, Mr., character of, 155; and Lorcha *Arrow*, 167; in office, 277; public works, 351; at Constantinople, 417
'Leap in the Dark,' the, 306
Lebanon, trouble in, 237–38
Lee defeated at Gettysburg, 249; surrenders, 250
Lesseps, M., 164
Lewis, Sir G. C., Chancellor of Exchequer, 156; character, 163; Home Secretary, 233; Reform Bill, 232; and Palmerston on war, 252; death of, 266
Light Brigade, charge of, 150
Lincoln, Abraham, President, 239; calls for volunteers, 240; and Wilkes' case, 243; assassination of, 251
Liprandi, General, 158
Livingstone, Dr., death of, 388
Llanover, Lord—*see* Hall, Sir B.

Lock, Mr., taken by Chinese, 235
Lorraine yielded to Germany, 372
Louis Philippe and Mohammed Ali, 30; Spanish marriages, 87; flight, 88; death, 99
Lowe, Mr., character, 106; Disraeli's Budget, 1852, 127; and Lord Robert Cecil, 276–77; and Reform Bill, 289–91; refuses office under Derby, 294; 'Our New Masters,' 306; Irish State Church, 345; elected University London, 347; Budgets of, 370; Match Tax, 371; resigns, 394; Home Secretary, 395; and Mr. Baxter, 395; and leadership, 405; and Queen's Title Bill, 408–409
Lowther, James, Irish Secretary, 420
Lucan, Lord, and Jews, 213
Lucknow, death of Henry Lawrence at, 181; relieved, 192; captured, 194
Lushington, Dr., death of, 389
Lyndhurst, Lord, character, 7–8; Lord Chancellor, 31; and Jews, 64; Lorcha *Arrow*, 165–66; and Jews, 211; and Louis Napoleon, 226; Paper duty, 228–29; death of, 348
Lytton, Lord, the Elder, in Parliament, 1837, 8; censure on Russell, 157; and Lorcha *Arrow*, 166; Colonial Secretary, 214; character, 215; Ionian islands, 216–17; on Lewis and Reform Bill, 232; death of, 388
Lytton, Lord, the Younger, Viceroy of India, 408

MACAULAY, Paymaster-General, 84; elected for Edinburgh, 124; maiden speech on Jewish question, 210; death of, 224–25
McCarthy, Sir Charles, and Ashantee war, 1824, 396
Macdonald, Sir J. A., and *Alabama* commission, 376
McGee, T. D., and 'Young Ireland,' 94
MacGahan, and Bulgarian atrocities, 413
Macnaghten, Sir W., and Dost Mohammed, 47; and Cabul rising, 48; murder of, 49, 55
Macnaghten, Lady, interview with Akbar Khan, 52

MAC

Mackintosh, and Jews, 210
Maclean, Roderick, attempt upon the Queen, 44
M'Laren, Duncan, elected for Edinburgh, 270
Magdala, 336; capture of, 338
Magenta, 221
Maguire, Mr., and Manchester rescue, 317; motion on Irish State Church, 342–43
Mahmoud, Sultan, war with Mohammed Ali, death of, 29
Malakoff attacked, 158
Malmesbury, Lord, Foreign Secretary, 207; and Chinese war, 1859–60, 233–35; moves vote of censure, 260
Mamelon battery, 158
Manchester, and trades-union outrages, 320–21
Mandeville, Sir John and Prester John, 335
Manhood suffrage, demanded by Chartists, 18
Manitoba, and Confederation, 307
Manners, Lord John, public works, 207
Manning, Cardinal, controversy with Gladstone, 405
Maori war, 258
Maronites, 237
Martineau, Miss, story of Coleridge, and postal system, 14–15
Mason, Mr., 243–44
Mathew, Father, temperance movement of, and O'Connell, 59
Maximilian, and Mexico, 249; shot, 250
Maynooth, grant to college at, 63; grant, 352
Mayo, Lord, Chief Secretary for Ireland, 207; and Irish State Church, 348; assassination of, 379
Mazzini, opening of letters of, 65
Meade, defeats Lee at Gettysburg, 249
Meagher, T. F., and 'Young Ireland,' 92; transported, 93; death of, 94, 312
Meean Meer, Montgomery's action at, 179
Meerut, outbreak in, 171
Melbourne, Lord, and accession of Princess Victoria, 3; character of, 5–6; and Jamaica Bill, 36; resigns, 36; returns to office, 36–7; and Bedchamber question, 37–9; resignation of, and death, 40; and Protestantism of Prince Albert, 41
Members, payment of, demanded by Chartists, 18
Mentschikoff, Prince, proposals to Turkey, 140; commanding Russian forces, 147
Merchant Shipping Bill, 404
Mexico, and Louis Napoleon, 249–50
Miall, Mr., and Forster's Education Bill, 363
Milan, entry into, 221
Militia Bill, 119–20; 123
Mill, John S., elected Westminster, 269–70; and Jamaica question, 286; and Gladstone's Reform Bill, 1866, 289; opposes suspension of *Habeas Corpus* in Ireland, 311; and Fenian prisoners, 316–17; on strikes, 323; defeated at Westminster, 347; death of, 388
Mitchel, John, and 'Young Ireland,' 92; transported, 93; death of, 94, 312
Mohammed Ali, 29–30
Mohammed, Dost, ruler of Cabul again, 57
Molesworth, Sir William, in Parliament of 1837, 9; and Pacifico case, 97; Colonial Secretary, 157
Monck, Lord, and Canadian Confederation, 309
Montauban, and Chinese War, 1859–60, 235
Monteagle, Lord, and paper duty, 228
Montefiore, Mr., first Jewish sheriff of London, knighted, 3–4
Montenegro and Turkey, 411; at war, 415; and Treaty of Berlin, 421
Montgomery, Mr. Robert, and Punjaub, 179
Montreal, represented by M. Papineau, 21
Morpeth, Lord—*see* Carlisle
—, —, Sister of, and Bedchamber question, 37
Morse, Professor, and electric telegraph, 12.

NAAS, Lord—*see* Mayo
Nagpore, annexed, 175
Nana Sahib, applied to by Wheeler, 183; case of, 183–84; besieges Cawnpore, 185; offers terms, 186;

NAP

his treachery, 187–88; massacre of the women, 189–90; disappears, 190–91
Napier, Lord, and Abyssinian war, 337–39
Napoleon, Louis, and Chartism, 90; character of, 115; *coup d'état*, 116; five projects of, 119; visits England, 157; and Orsini, 200–201; and Cavour, 217–18; enters Milan, 221; distrust of in England, 225–26; Commercial Treaty, 227; and Southern Confederacy, 248; Mexico, 249–50; Poland, 255–56; Danes, 259; Prussian War, 371–72; death of, 387–88
Napoleon, Prince, and free trade, 226–27
Napoleon, Prince Imperial, death of, 429
Nashville, Confederate privateer, 245
Nation, newspaper, 91
Navigation laws, repeal of, 121
Neale, Colonel, and Prince Satsuma, 254
Neill, General, at Allahabad, 189
Nelson, Mr. Justice, and *Alabama* commission, 376
Nesselrode Memorandum, 136
New Brunswick and Canadian Confederation, 307–308
Newcastle, Duke of, Colonial Secretary, 223; death of, 266
Newfoundland, 307
Newman, F. W., 33–34
Newman, John Henry, and Oxford Movement, 32–34; controversy with Gladstone, 405
New South Wales and transportation, 167–68, 310
Newspapers, reduction of stamp duty on, 28
New Zealand, constitution of, 123; Maori insurrection in, 253, 310
Nicholas, Emperor, in England, 135–36; conversations with Sir Hamilton Seymour, 137; death of, 156
Nicholson, killed at Delhi, 191
Nightingale, Miss Florence, at Crimea, 153
Nonconformists and Forster's Education Bill, 362–63
Norfolk Island and transportation, 167–68
Normanby, Lord, and Bedchamber question, 37–39, and *coup d'état*, 116

PAL

Northcote, Sir Stafford, 280; President Board of Trade, 294; Indian Secretary, 303; and *Alabama* commission, 376; Chancellor Exchequer, 397; Leader in House of Commons, 430
Nott, General, at Candahar, 54
Nova Scotia and Canadian Confederation, 307-309

O'BRIEN, W. S., and 'Young Ireland,' 91-94, 312
O'Brien and Manchester rescue, 317
Obstruction, physical, to Russell's Reform Bill, 238
O'Connell, Daniel, in Parliament, 1837, 11, 57; Catholic emancipation, 58; negro slavery, 58; Parliamentary system, 59; monster meetings, 60; imprisoned, 61; death, 62; and Jews, 210
O'Connor, Arthur, attempt upon Queen's life, 43–44
O'Connor, Feargus, and Chartism, 88–89
Opium war, 25–28
Orange Free State, 427
Oregon Treaty, 66–67
Oreto, Confederate privateer, 245
Orsini, Felice, 200–201
Ortega, Mexican general, shot, 250
Osborne, Bernal, attacks Disraeli's budget, 1852, 127; and Salomon's case, 212; unseated, 347
Osman Pasha at Plevna, 416–17
Otho of Greece, 95, 217
Oudh, annexed, 175; king of, 177; proclamation to chiefs of, 197
Outram and Persian War, 176, 179; at Alumbagh, 193; on Canning's proclamation, 196
Oxford, Edward, attempts life of Queen, 43
Oxford Movement, 32–34, 399

PACIFICO, DON, case of, 95–96
'Painted Chamber' phrase, 230
Pakington, Sir John, Admiralty, 207, 294; and 'Ten Minutes' Bill, 301–303
Palikao, General, 235
Palmer, Roundell—*see* Selborne, Lord
Palmerston, Lord, Foreign Secretary, 9, 84; Pacifico case, 96–97; foreign

PAN

sympathies, 110; difficulties with Queen and Prince Albert, 111–13; and Kossuth, 115; and *coup d'état*, 116; dismissed, 117–18; Militia Bill, 120; Home Secretary, 128–141; resigns, 142; resumes office, 143; and Roebuck's Crimean motion, 154; forms Ministry, 155; and Crimean army, 156; and Crimean war, 159; Lorcha *Arrow*, 166–67; Divorce Act, 167; Indian Government, 198–99; Conspiracy to Murder Bill, 199–200, 202–206, 209; at Willis's Rooms, 221; forms Ministry, 222–23; offers places to Mill, Cobden, and Milner Gibson, 223–24; and Bright, 224, paper duty, 229–31; and reform, 232–33; and *Trent* affair, 243; and Radical party, 251–52; and Poland, 256–57; and Danes, 258; last great speech, 260–61; on Cobden's death, 267; death, of 271–75; and tenant right, 356

Panmure, Lord, War Secretary, 155
Papal court and hierarchy, 99–106
Paper duty, 28, 226–31
Papineau, Louis, and Canadian rebellion, 21–22
Paris, Congress of, 160–61; alteration in Treaty of, 373–74
Parkes, Sir James, and life peerage, 162
Parkes, Mr., and Lorcha *Arrow*, 164; taken by Chinese, 235
Parnell, Mr., 425
Pascal, reference to, 14
Pate, Robert, attacks Queen, 43
Paxton, Sir J., builds Great Exhibition, 109
Peace Society, 146
Peel, General, 207, 294; resigns, 301–303
Peel, Sir Robert, character, 9–10; his travelling from Rome contrasted with Constantine's, 12; Jamaica Bill, 36; Bedchamber question, 37–39; Queen's marriage, 39; censures Melbourne Ministry, 40; Bill to punish attacks on Queen, 43; Maynooth grant, 63; Anti-Corn Law League, 72–78; resigns, 75; repeals corn laws, 83; resigns, 84; Pacifico case, 97; death, 98–99; and Palmerston, 110; and Wellington, 125
Peel, Sir W., death of at Lucknow, 194

RAS

Pelissier, at Crimea, 158
Persia, and Dost Mohammed, 45; war with East India Company, 176–179; Shah of, 328
Persigny and Orsini plot, 202
Peter the Great, supposed will of, 134
Petrel, Confederate privateer, 245
Phœnix Society, 313
Pierri, accomplice of Orsini, 201
Pius IX., sympathy with North, 242
Plevna, 417
Plimsoll, Mr., and merchant seamen, 401–404
Plowden, Mr., and Abyssinia, 335–36
Poerio, and Gladstone, 131
Poland, insurrection in, 254–57
Pollock, General, and Afghan War, 54–55; 58
Pomare, Queen of Tahiti, 66
Postal system and Rowland Hill, 14–16
Pottinger, Eldred, and Afghan War, 50
Prideaux, Lieutenant, Abyssinian prisoner, 335–337
Prince Edward's Island and Canadian Confederation, 307
Pritchard and Tahiti question, 66
Property qualification for Parliament abolished, 214
Prussia, war with Austria mentioned, 4; Mohammed Ali, 30; King of and Great Exhibition, 108; Russian influence upon, 143; King of, 144; Foreign Legion Act, 161; Poland, 255–56; war with Denmark, 257–60; war with Austria, 298; war with France, 371–72
Public Worship Bill, 399–401
Punch cartoon, General Fevrier turned traitor, 156
Punjaub annexed, 175; saved, 179
Purchase in army abolished, 363–68
Pusey, Dr., and Oxford movement, 32

QUEEN, the—*see* Victoria
Queen's Colleges, 63
Queen's Title Bill, 408–409
Queensland, 310

RAGLAN, LORD, commands English forces at Crimean war, 147; death of, 157
Railways, regulation of, 64
Rassam, Mr., Abyssinian prisoner, 335–337

Rebecca riots, 65
Redan stormed, 158
Redcliffe, Lord Stratford de, and Vienna Note, 140–41
Red River rebellion, 309
Registration, general measures for, 28
Regium Donum, 352
Reform agitation, 1866, in Hyde Park, 295–97; in country, 297–99
Reform Bill of 1832, and its results, 17; Mr. Disraeli's, 218–21; Russell and reform, 218; and Disraeli's Reform Bill, 221; and new Ministry, 222–23; Lord Grey's, 220; of Palmerston Ministry, 226; abandoned, 231–33; Russell's, 268; Gladstone's, of, 1866, 288–92; Mr. Disraeli's measures, 299–305; meeting in Hyde Park, 305
Repeal, and O'Connell, 57–62; movement and 'Young Ireland,' 91
Republicanism, in England, 381–83
Richardson, Mr., murdered in Japan, 253–54
Richmond, Duke of, at Board of Trade, 303; and army purchase, 365; President of Council, 1874, 397
Richmond taken, 250
— Prison, O'Connell in, 61
Riel, Louis, and Red River rebellion, 309
Ripon, Lord, and *Alabama* commission, 376; resign presidency of Council, 395
Ritualism, 400
Roebuck, Mr., not in Parliament of 1837, 9; resolution supporting Palmerston, 96; resolution in Pacifico case, 96–97; and Ecclesiastical Titles Act, 103; Crimean motion, 153; carried, 154, 157; and Lorcha *Arrow*, 166; and Conspiracy Bill, 203; and recognition of the Southern States, 248–49; defeated at Sheffield, 347
Rose, Sir Hugh, and Ranee of Jhansi, 195
Rosenau, Prince Albert's birthplace, 40
Rothschild, Baron, in House of Commons, 210–11
Roumania, and Derby, 410; and Treaty of Berlin, 421–22
Roumelia, Eastern, 421
Royal British Bank, failure of, 163
Royal William, Transatlantic voyage of, 18

Runjeet, Singh, and Cashmere, 46
Russell, Lord John, leader of House of Commons in 1837, 9; character of, 10–11; and term 'Conservative,' 11; opposed to further reform in 1837, 17; sends Lord Durham to Canada, 22; and Bedchamber question, 38; and Anti-Corn Law League, 72–73; Edinburgh letter, 75; fails to form a Ministry, 75–76; forms Administration, 84; and Durham Letter, 101; resigns, 103; resumes office, 104; and Ecclesiastical Titles Act, 102–105; and disagreement between the Queen and Palmerston, 112–13; and Kossuth difficulty, 114; and *coup d'état*, 116; dismisses Lord Palmerston, 117–18; Palmerston's 'tit-for-tat' with, 118; Militia Bill, 120; resigns, 120–21; conference of Liberal members at his house, 122; at Foreign Office, Coalition Ministry, 1852, 128; resigns office, 154; fails to form Ministry, 155; Colonial Secretary, 156; goes to Vienna, 156; resigns, 157; education resolutions rejected, 162; and Lorcha *Arrow*, 166; and Indian Government, 199, 209; and Jews, 210; and Salomon's case, 211–13; at Willis's Rooms, 221; Foreign Secretary, 223; and recognition of Southern Confederacy, 240, and *Alabama*, 247; correspondence with Mr. Adams, 248; and Mexico, 249; and Gortschakoff, on Polish insurrection, 256; and Danes, 258–59; Reform Bill of, 268; forms Government, 275; goes to Lords, 276; and Reform Bill of 1866, 289; resigns, 292; his career, 293; and suspension of *Habeas Corpus* in Ireland, 311; and Abyssinia, 336; and Irish State Church, 345; death of, 424–25
Russell, W. H., 148
Russia, and Turkish war, with Mohammed Ali, 29–30; and Afghanistan, 46; and Pacifico case, 96; growth of, 133–35; destruction of Turkish fleet at Sinope, 143; and Sepoy, 176; sympathy of with Northern States, 242; and Polish insurrection, 254–7; and Treaty of Paris, 373; and Turkey, 410; war with Turkey, 416–18; Treaty of

SAD

San Stefano, 419; of Berlin, 420–22; and Treaty of Berlin, 422–23

SADLEIR, James and John, 163
Sale, General, and Afghan War, 52–56
Sale, Lady, 52
Salisbury, Lord, and Lorcha *Arrow*, 166; and Lowe, 276–77; character, 280–81; Indian Secretary, 295; resigns on 'Ten Minutes' Bill, 301–303; 'Leap in the Dark,' 306; Irish State Church, 345; Indian Secretary, 397; Public Worship Bill, 401; Constantinople Conference, 415; Foreign Minister, 420; at Congress of Berlin, 420
Salomons, Mr. David, case of, 211–13
Salonica, outbreak at, 410
San Jacinto and *Trent* affair, 243
San Juan question, 376–78
San Stefano Treaty, 419
Sardinia and Crimean War, 158; and Congress of Paris, 161
Satsuma, Prince, 254
Sattara annexed, 175
Savannah, Confederate privateer, 245
'Saxon,' term used by O'Connell, 59
Schenck, General, and *Alabama* commission, 376
Schleswig-Holstein question, 257–60
School Board system, 361–63
Scinde annexed, 65
Scindia and Indian Mutiny, 193–94
Scotland, Kirk of, 34–35
Scutari, hospitals at, 152; Miss Nightingale at, 153
Sebastopol, besieged, 147–51, 153; abandoned, 158; restored to Russia, 160
Secocoeni, 427
Sedan, battle of, 372
Sedgwick, Professor, death of, 388
Selborne, Lord, and Ecclesiastical Titles Act, 103; Lorcha *Arrow*, 166; Irish State Church, 353; Lord Chancellor, 391
Semmes, captain of *Alabama*, 246–47
Servia and Turkey, 411; at war, 415; Treaty of Berlin, 421
Sewell, Chief Justice and Canadian Confederation, 308
Seymour, Sir Hamilton, conversations with Czar Nicholas, 137
Seymour, Admiral, Sir M., bombards Canton, 165

SUM

Shaftesbury, Lord, employment of women in mines, 62; Factories Act, 63; Ellenborough despatch, 197; Poland, 255
Sheffield, trades-union outrages at, 319–21
Sheil, R. L., in Parliament, 1837, 11
Shelton, Brigadier, in Afghan War, 48, 50, 53
Shepstone, Sir Theophilus, annexes Transvaal, 427–28
Shere Ali, 425–26
Shore or Condon and Manchester rescue, 317
Sikh wars, 66, 175
Simpson, General, at Crimea, 157–58
Sinope, Turkish fleet destroyed at, 143
Slave circulars, 404–405
Slavery, and O'Connell, 53; in America, 239–40; abolished, 251
Sliddell, Mr., and *Trent* case, 243
Smith, W. H., elected for Westminster, 347
Solferino, battle of, 221
Soojah, Shah, 46; entry into Cabul, 47; death of, 54
South Africa, confederation scheme, 407; war in, 427–30
South Australia, 310
Spanish marriages, 87–88
Spain and Mexico, 249; Franco-Prussian war, 371
Spencer, Herbert, and Jamaica question, 286
Stamp duty, 28; 227–28
Stanley, Colonel, War Secretary, 420
Stanley, Mr., discovers Livingstone, 388
Stanley, Lord—*see* Derby, Lord
Stephens, James, 314–15
St. Leonards, Lord, Lord Chancellor 121
Stoddart, Colonel, prisoner in Bokhara, 56
Strikes, Mill on, 323
Stroud, Russell on term 'Conservative' at, 8; Conservative victory at, 395
Sturt, Mrs., in withdrawal from Cabul, 52
Sugar duties, 87; foreign and colonial, 121
Sullivan, Mr. A. M., and Mr. Plimsoll, 406
Summer palace, destruction of, 236

SUM

Sumner, Charles, and *Alabama* claims, 374–75
Sumter Fort taken, 240
Sumter, Confederate privateer, 245
Suttee, suppression of, 175
Swinburne, A. C., and Manchester prisoners, 317
Syria, war in, 29; Lebanon disturbances, 237–38

TAHITI, dispute with France about, 66
Tantia Topee, Nana Sahib's lieutenant, 186–87; execution of, 195
Tara, hill of, meeting held by O'Connell at, 60
Tasmania and transportation, 167–68; 310
Telegraph, postal, 334
Tennyson, Alfred, and Jamaica question, 286
Thackeray, death of, 265
Theodore of Abyssinia, 335–38
Thesiger, Sir F.—*see* Chelmsford, Lord
Thiers and Mohammed Ali, 30; and Commercial Treaty, 227
Thornton, Sir E., and *Alabama* commission, 377
Tichborne case, 386–87
Ticket of leave system, 168–70
Tien-Tsin, Treaty of, 207, 233–35
Todleben, General, and Crimean war, 162; and Russo-Turkish, 417
Tone, Wolfe, O'Connell on, 59, 311
Tractarians, the, 399
Tracts for the Times, 32
Trades Unions, Sheffield outrages, 319–21; account of, 322–24
Transportation, 167–70
Transvaal, annexed, 427–28
Trent affiair, 243–44
Trevelyan, G O., in Parliament, 270
Trevor, Mrs., in withdrawal from Cabul, 52
Turgot, and *coup d'état*, 116
Turkey, Mohammed Ali, 29–30; treachery of Capitan Pasha, 29; gradual decay of, 132–33; antagonism with Russia, 135; 'sick man,' 137; Kutchuk-Kainardji Treaty, 138–40; fleet destroyed at Sinope, 143; Dardanelles and Bosphorus, 144–45; Congress of Paris, 160; Lebanon disturbances, 237–38; Abdul Aziz in England, 327–28; Herzegovina rising, 410–11;

WHE

death of Abdul Aziz, dethronement of Murad, accession of Hamid, 412; Bulgarian atrocities, 413–14; war with Servia, 415; war with Russia, 416–17; Treaty of San Stefano, 419; Treaty of Berlin, 420–22; Secret Treaty with England, 422-23

ULSTER, tenant right, 356–58
United Irishman newspaper, 92
United States—*see* America
University Tests Bill, 370

VACCINATION ACT, 28
Vancouver's Island, 67; and confederation, 307
Venetia added to Italy, 298
Vicksburg taken, 249
Victoria, education, 2; accession, 3; affection for Melbourne, 6; Bedchamber question, 37–39; marriage, 39–42; attempts on life of, 43–44; difficulty with Palmerston, 111–17; and Dundonald, 238; death of Prince Consort, 244–45, 288
Victoria, colony of, 310
Victor Emanuel, enters Milan, 221; visits England, 226
Villiers, Charles, and Anti-Corn Law League, 68, 126–27
Volunteer movement, 118–20, 226

WALES, PRINCE OF, birth, 44; illness, 382
Walewski, and *coup d'état*, 116–17; Orsini plot, 202
Walpole, Mr., Home Secretary, 207; resigns, 220; Home Secretary, 294; reform disturbances, 297, 305; resigns, 306; retirement of, 331
Wellington, Duke of, and Protestantism of Prince Consort, 41; opposes opening ports, 74; Chartism, 90; 'Who? who?' Ministry, 122; and Peel's death, 125; death of, 124–26; conversation with Czar Nicholas, 136
Wensleydale Peerage, 162
Westbury, Lord, resigns, 267–68; death of, 388
Western Australia, 310
Wheatstone, Prof., and electric telegraph, 12

WHE

Wheeler, Sir Hugh, at Cawnpore, 182, 185
Whiteside, and Lorcha *Arrow*, 166
'Who ? who ?' Ministry, 122
Wilberforce, Bishop, death of, 388
Wilkes, Captain, and *Trent*, 243–44
William IV., death and character of, 1–2 ; and Dundonald, 238
Williams, Mr. Justice, and *Alabama* commission, 376
Willis's Rooms meeting, 221
Windham, General, defeated at Cawnpore, 194
Window tax, partial repeal of proposed, 103
Wiseman, Cardinal, 100 ; death of, 206

YOU

Wolff, Dr., and Bokhara prisoners, 56–57
Wolseley, Lord, and Red River rebellion, 309 ; Ashantee war, 396–97
Wood, Sir Charles, Chancellor of Exchequer, 84 ; Admiralty, 156 ; Indian Secretary, 223
Wood, Sir W. Page—*see* Hatherley, Lord
Wynn, Miss, account of accession, 2

YAKOOB KHAN, 426
Yeh, Commissioner, and Lorcha *Arrow*, 164 ; captured, 206–207
Young Ireland,' 91–94

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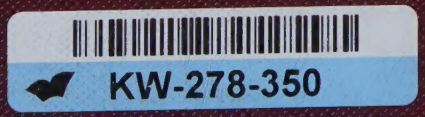
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